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BON APPÉTIT
VOLUME 53
NUMBER 9



THE RESTAURANT ISSUE

WE WENT BEHIND THE SCENES OF AMERICA'S BEST RESTAURANTS TO BRING YOU THE MOST DELICIOUS RECIPES AND INSPIRING STORIES.
pg. 100

CEDRIC ANGELES

FIND THE RECIPE FOR DAHLIA LOUNGE'S FENNEL-HONEY PORK ROAST (ABOVE) AT *bonappetit.com/magazine.*



digging into the staff meal at otto in new york / 151

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CEDRIC ANGELES

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CHECK BACK NEXT MONTH TO LEARN ALL ABOUT THE WINNER OF *THE NEXT FOOD NETWORK STAR*

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL RESTAURANT/

MY FAVORITE BREAKFAST CEREAL JUST HIT $7 A BOX. The milk that goes on top of it is approaching $2.50 a quart. And just when did eggs get to be so expensive? And—no surprise—the gasoline that I need here in L.A. to get to the market (or to work, for that matter) will most likely be well over $5 a gallon by the time that you read this.

These are trying times, no question.

So why do I feel like eating out?

Well, for one thing, it's relaxing. Also a lot of fun, if you're with the right people, say, for instance, not your tax lawyer. And all things considered, it's a very nice (and delicious) way of treating yourself to something special—maybe once or twice a month now instead of more often—that can make you feel better about everything.

Those ideas really haven't changed much over the years. What *has* changed is the nature of the restaurant: The places that draw us in these days tend to be extensions of our home, and not the more spiffed-up special-occasion-type spots. (Read: stiff, expensive, daunting.) They're the casual, more neighborhood-y places. Better yet, for many of us, we can actually *walk* to a great local spot, reducing our carbon footprint while getting a little exercise in the process.

Working on this, our 15th annual Special Restaurant Issue, also helped me focus on another facet of today's most popular restaurants: The food has become more approachable, and can be easy to make, as well as nostalgic. This issue is packed with dozens of new recipes that have a modern spin, but their soul lives in dishes that make us hungry just to hear the names: chicken Parmesan; mac and cheese (this time with pancetta); meatloaf with "crushed" potatoes; gnocchi; ravioli; shepherd's pie (this version with healthful bison); and lots more. I haven't even touched on the amazing desserts, like coconut-mint cream cake, cappuccino éclairs, Key lime cupcakes, brownie-chunk cookies, a clever Concord grape pie, and an updated banana bread. This issue finds even the most acclaimed chef in America, none other than The French Laundry's Thomas Keller, making...buttermilk fried chicken. Yes, it's true. Man cannot live by caviar and foie gras alone. Go to page 112 to see for yourself.

Now I do consider myself someone who likes to keep up with what's going on in the restaurant world, all over the world. Actually, we have a lot of people like that around here, as you might imagine. However, Andrew Knowlton is in a class by himself. In fact, Andrew is so obsessed with restaurants of all kinds—and chefs, and bartenders (uh, I mean mixologists)—that last year I made his passion even more legit by officially promoting him to Restaurant Editor. He has been in charge of coordinating our restaurant coverage ever since.

You may already know Andrew as a frequent judge on Food Network's *Iron Chef America* (he was also part of the team that helped crown Michael Symon as the newest Iron Chef). This month we introduce Andrew in our pages in another capacity: as "The BA Foodist," your new go-to guy for questions regarding restaurants, restaurant food, bars, lounges, really anything that might be puzzling you about that scene. I hesitate to use the word *etiquette,* because it sounds, well, way too old-fashioned for what Andrew is about. He won't be able to help you with, say, how to get a red wine stain out of the white shirt you wore to that Syrah tasting last week. But he will be able to tell you which bottle of Syrah might be the best one to order if you're stumped when a huge wine list gets plopped down in front of you. Andrew is young, opinionated, and not easily fooled. He's a tough critic. He's also the perfect guy to help you get your game on, at least restaurant-wise. So have a look at his new column on page 40, and start e-mailing those questions to bafoodist@bonappetit.com. (Andrew has also started blogging at bonappetit.com/go/bafoodist.)

Okay, now I've got to get back to the recipes for sides and desserts in this issue. Because this Friday night we'll go to our favorite bistro that's right around the corner, and then on Saturday night, it's Thomas Keller and me in the kitchen, in all our fried chicken glory. That's really the point here: Support the folks who keep you happy and well fed at your local hangout, then come home, dip into this issue, make the recipes that you find really, really appealing (my bet is that you will find plenty), and transport yourself to another neighborhood somewhere. No gasoline—at any price—required.

BARBARA FAIRCHILD
Editor-in-Chief

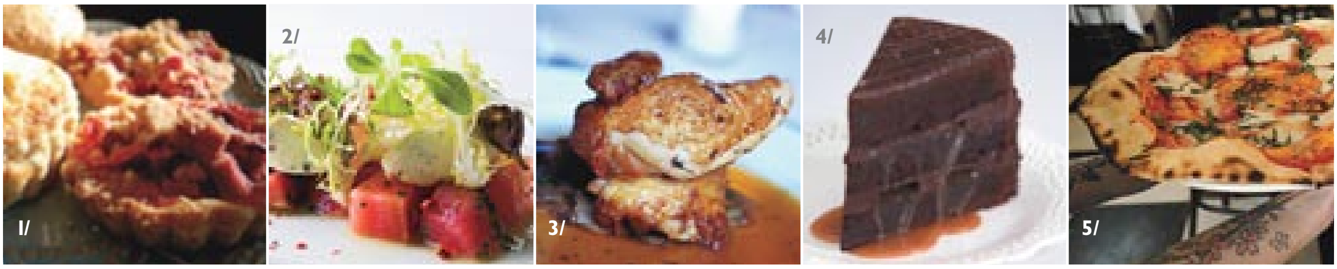


JONATHAN BECKER

RESTAURANT DIRECTORY

The guide to going out: addresses, phone numbers, and Web sites of all the places featured in this issue

1. TROIS POMMES PATISSERIE, NEW YORK; 2. CUSTOM HOUSE, CHICAGO; 3. BOUCHON, LAS VEGAS; 4. VANILLA BAKE SHOP, SANTA MONICA; 5. CAFÉ LAGO, SEATTLE



NEW YORK

Angel's Share/ *pg. 120*
8 Stuyvesant St., Second Fl., New York, NY; 212-777-5415

Annisa/ *pg. 36*
13 Barrow St., New York, NY; 212-741-6699; annisarestaurant.com

Babbo/ *pg. 80*
110 Waverly Pl., New York, NY; 212-777-0303; babbonyc.com

Bar Q/ *pg. 36*
308-310 Bleecker St., New York, NY; 212-206-7817

Batch/ *pg. 36*
150B W. 10th St., New York, NY; 212-929-0250

Birdbath, Neighborhood Green Bakery/ *pg. 128*
223 First Ave., New York, NY; 646-722-6565; buildagreenbakery.com

Birdbath, Neighborhood Green Bakery/ *pg. 128*
145 Seventh Ave. South, New York, NY; 646-722-6570; buildagreenbakery.com

Bouchon Bakery and Café/ *pg. 112*
Time Warner Center
10 Columbus Circle, Third Fl., New York, NY; 212-823-9366; bouchonbakery.com

The City Bakery/ *pg. 128*
Union Square, 3 W. 18th St., New York, NY; 212-366-1414; thecitybakery.com

Dirty Bird To-Go/ *pg. 136*
204 W. 14th St., New York, NY; 212-620-4836; dirtybirdtogo.com

El Quinto Pino/ *pg. 136*
401 W. 24th St., New York, NY; 212-206-6900

Jumeirah Essex House/ *pg. 48*
160 Central Park S., New York, NY; 212-247-0300; jumeirahessexhouse.com

Lupa/ *pg. 136*
170 Thompson St., New York, NY; 212-982-5089; luparestaurant.com

Mia Dona/ *pg. 102*
206 E. 58th St., New York, NY; 212-750-8170; miadona.com

Milk & Honey/ *pg. 120*
134 Eldridge St., New York, NY; mlkhny.com

Momofuku Ko/ *pg. 50*
163 First Ave., New York, NY; momofuku.com

The North Fork Table & Inn/ *pg. 44*
57225 Main Rd., Southold, NY; 631-765-0177; northforktableandinn.com

Otto/ *pg. 144*
1 Fifth Ave., New York, NY; 212-995-9559; ottopizzeria.com

Payard Pâtisserie and Bistro/ *pg. 50*
1032 Lexington Ave., New York, NY; 212-717-5252; payard.com

Per Se/ *pg. 112*
Time Warner Center
10 Columbus Circle, Fourth Fl.; New York, NY; 212-823-9335; perseny.com

P*Ong/ *pg. 36*
150 W. 10th St., New York, NY; 212-929-0898; p-ong.com

Puttanesca/ *pg. 162*
859 Ninth Ave., New York, NY; 212-581-4177; puttanesca.com

Salamander's General Store/ *pg. 44*
414 First St., Greenport, NY; 631-477-3711

Shinn Estate Farmhouse/ *pg. 44*
2000 Oregon Rd., Mattituck, NY; 631-804-0367; shinnfarmhouse.com

Sidecar/ *pg. 40*
560 Fifth Ave., Brooklyn, NY; 718-369-0077; sidecarbrooklyn.com

Southold Fish Market/ *pg. 44*
61850 Main Road, Southold, NY; 631-765-3200

Tía Pol/ *pg. 136*
205 Tenth Ave., New York, NY; 212-675-8805; tiapol.com

Trois Pommes Patisserie/ *pg. 128*
260 Fifth Ave., Brooklyn, NY; 718-230-3119; troispommespatisserie.com

Vine/ *pg. 44*
100 South St., Greenport, NY; 631-477-6238; vinewinebar.com

CENTRAL AND THE ROCKIES

A Mano Trattoria/ *pg. 102*
335 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL; 312-629-3500; amanochicago.com

Acero/ *pg. 102*
7266 Manchester Rd., St. Louis, MO; 314-644-1790; liluma.com

Custom House/ *pg. 36*
500 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL; 312-523-0200; customhouse.cc

Fahrenheit/ *pg. 28*
2417 Professor Ave., Cleveland, OH; 216-781-8858; fahrenheittremont.com

Green Zebra/ *pg. 36*
1460 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL; 312-243-7100; greenzebrachicago.com

Kelly Liken/ *pg. 136*
12 Vail Rd., Ste. 100, Vail, CO; 970-479-0175; kellyliken.com

Mizuna/ *pg. 144*
225 E. Seventh Ave.; Denver, CO; 303-832-4778; mizunadenver.com

Osteria Marco/ *pg. 102*
1453 Larimer Square, Denver, CO; 303-534-5855; osteriamarco.com

Spiaggia/ *pg. 50*
980 N. Michigan Ave., Level 2, Chicago, IL; 312-280-2750; spiaggiarestaurant.com

Spring Restaurant/ *pg. 36*
2039 W. North Ave., Chicago, IL; 773-395-7100; springrestaurant.net

Table Fifty-Two/ *pg. 144*
52 W. Elm St., Chicago, IL; 312-573-4000; tablefifty-two.com

SOUTHWEST

Bouchon/ *pg. 112*
The Venetian Resort Hotel Casino
3355 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Ste. 10101, Las Vegas, NV; 702-414-6200; bouchonbistro.com

Bouchon Bakery Las Vegas/ *pg. 112*
The Venetian Resort Hotel Casino
3355 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas, NV; 702-414-6203; bouchonbakery.com

Fontana Bar & Lounge/ *pg. 28*
Bellagio
3600 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas, NV; 702-693-7089; bellagio.com

Nonna/ *pg. 102*
4115 Lomo Alto Dr., Dallas, TX; 214-521-1800; nonnadallas.com

Restaurant Le Rêve/ *pg. 144*
152 E. Pecan St., San Antonio, TX; 210-212-2221; restaurantlereve.com

The Sweet Pea Bakery & Catering/ *pg. 128*
209 W. Jackson St., Phoenix, AZ; 602-296-4042; sweetpeaaz.com

Tart Pastry Boutique and Studio/ *pg. 128*
5219 W. Lovers Ln., Ste. B, Dallas, TX; 469-335-8919; tartbakerydallas.com

Tart Pastry Boutique and Studio/ *pg. 128*
7140 Bishop Rd., Ste. F5, Plano, TX; 972-673-0446; tartbakerydallas.com

PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Alba Osteria & Enoteca/ *pg. 102*
6440 SW Capitol Hwy., Portland, OR; 503-977-3045; albaosteria.com

Beast/ *pg. 136*
5425 NE 30th Ave., Portland, OR; 503-841-6968; beastpdx.com

Café Lago/ *pg. 88*
2305 24th Ave. E., Seattle, WA; 206-329-8005; cafelago.com

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Cascadia Restaurant/ *pg. 28*
2328 First Ave., Seattle, WA; 206-448-8884; cascadiarestaurant.com

Dahlia Lounge/ *pg. 144*
2001 Fourth Ave., Seattle, WA; 206-682-4142; tomdouglas.com

Sugar Bakery + Cafe/ *pg. 128*
1014 Madison St., Seattle, WA; 206-749-4105; sugarbakerycafe.com

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Angeli Caffè / *pg. 136*
7274 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA; 323-936-9086; angelicaffe.com

Chateau Marmont/ *pg. 38*
8221 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA; 323-656-1010; chateaumarmont.com

The City Bakery/ *pg. 128*
225 26th St., Santa Monica, CA; 310-656-3040; thecitybakery.com

Daily Grill/ *pg. 38*
612 S. Flower St., Los Angeles, CA; 213-622-4500; dailygrill.com

Osteria Mozza/ *pgs. 38, 80, 102*
6602 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA; 323-297-0100; mozza-la.com

Steakhouse 55/ *pg. 28*
Disneyland Hotel
1150 Magic Way, Anaheim, CA; 714-781-3463; disneyland.com

Vanilla Bake Shop/ *pg. 128*
512 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA; 310-458-6644; vanillabakeshop.com

The Village Idiot/ *pg. 100*
7383 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA; 323-655-3331

CENTRAL AND NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

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6476 Washington St., Yountville, CA; 707-944-2487; adhocrestaurant.com

A16/ *pgs. 36, 50, 80*
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5098 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, CA; 510-985-1213; bakesalebetty.com

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6534 Washington St., Yountville, CA; 707-944-8037; bouchonbistro.com

Bouchon Bakery Yountville/ *pg. 112*
6528 Washington St., Yountville, CA; 707-944-2253; bouchonbakery.com

The Fifth Floor Restaurant/ *pg. 136*
Hotel Palomar, Fifth Fl., 12 Fourth St., San Francisco, CA; 415-348-1555; fifthfloorrestaurant.com

The French Laundry/ *pg. 112*
6640 Washington St., Yountville, CA; 707-944-2380; frenchlaundry.com

Sea Salt/ *pg. 40*
2512 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, CA; 510-883-1720; seasaltrestaurant.com

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644 First St., Napa, CA; 707-224-6900; taylorsrefresher.com

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1658 Market St., San Francisco, CA; 415-552-2522; zunicafe.com

NEW ENGLAND

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9 Park St., Boston, MA; 617-742-9991; no9park.com

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500 Harrison Ave., Boston, MA; 617-451-5151; roccaboston.com

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MID-ATLANTIC

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SOUTH

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Imperial Hotel Tokyo/ *pg. 120*
1-1 Uchisaiwai-cho 1-chome Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; 011-81-3-3504-1111; imperialhotel.co.jp/index_e .html

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KN Bldg. B2F, 6-4-12 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo; 011-81-3-5568-1993

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3-7-1-2 Nishi-Shinjuku, 52nd Fl., Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo; 011-81-3-5322-1234; tokyo.park.hyatt.com

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Peter at The Peninsula Tokyo/ *pg. 120*
1-8-1 Yurakucho, 24th Fl., Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; 011-81-3-6270-2763; tokyo.peninsula.com

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Tender Bar/ *pg. 120*
Nogakudo Bldg., 6-5-15 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo; 011-81-3-3571-8343

Tokyo Kaikan/ *pg. 120*
3-2-1, Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; 011-81-3-3215-2111; tokyokaikan.com

BELIZE

Victoria House/ *pg. 28*
Coconut Drive, Ambergris Caye, Belize; 011-501-226-2067; victoria-house.com

ENGLAND

Nobu Berkeley St / *pg. 48*
15 Berkeley St.; London, England; 011-44-207-290-9222; noburestaurants.com

St. John/ *pg. 40*
26 St. John St., London, England; 011-44-20-7251-0848; stjohnrestaurant.com

FRANCE

L'Ambassade d'Auvergne/ *pg. 28*
22 rue du Grenier-Saint-Lazare, 3rd arrondissement, Paris, France; 011-33-1-42-72-31-22; ambassade-auvergne.com

ITALY

Osteria Anice Stellato/ *pg. 28*
Fondamenta de la Sensa, Cannaregio 3272, Venice, Italy; 011-39-041-720-744

SINGAPORE

Raffles Hotel Singapore/ *pg. 120*
1 Beach Rd., Singapore; 011-65-6337-1886; singapore.raffles.com/■



Melissa Clark/

Clark was never one of those kids who refused to eat anything except chicken nuggets. "My parents were foodies," says the James Beard Award-winning writer, "and I was eating at fancy restaurants at a young age." Clark's family trips to France introduced her to caviar and foie gras. As an adult, she turned a passion into a career: She is the author of 21 cookbooks, including *The Skinny,* and numerous articles in *The New York Times* and *Departures*. THE FOOD WRITER'S DIET, *page 93*

Evan Kleiman/

The Los Angeles-based restaurant owner and self-professed "culinary multitasker" was impressed by the women she wrote about for this month's feature on up-and-coming chefs. "It was humbling to see so much energy," she says. Kleiman's own restaurant, Angeli Caffè, has been open for almost 24 years, so she understands the unique challenges they face. In her free time, Kleiman volunteers at SEE-LA and Roots of Change, nonprofit organizations advocating sustainable food consumption. WOMEN CHEFS: THE NEXT GENERATION, *page 136*

Mark Gaier/

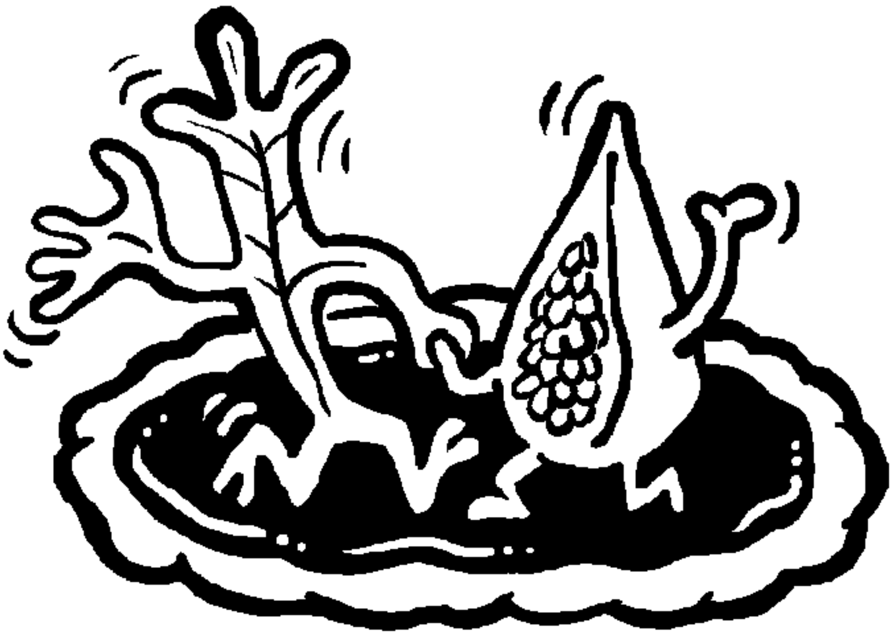
What did the chef enjoy most about working with mint for this issue? "You get to use your imagination," he says. Gaier is no stranger to creativity in the kitchen. He and co-chef Clark Frasier opened their acclaimed Arrows Restaurant in a former farmhouse in Ogunquit, Maine. Gaier and Frasier (or "Mark and Clark," as the duo is also known) craft the menu using the adjacent garden and greenhouse, where fresh produce and herbs are gathered daily. AT THE MARKET: MINT, *page 70*

Clark Frasier/

After spending two years in Beijing when he was in his early 20s, Frasier was inspired by the regional cooking. Eating with the Chinese locals, he had only what was seasonally available, and it reinforced the value—and joy—of eating food prepared with fresh, local ingredients. He continues to celebrate regional fare, and he and co-chef Mark Gaier's latest restaurant, Summer Winter (located in Burlington, Massachusetts), features eclectic seasonal food honoring the tradition of Northeast cooking. AT THE MARKET: MINT, *page 70*

DIVYA SRINIVASAN

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BOOKS BY THE EDITORS OF *BON APPÉTIT* AND OUR CONTRIBUTORS, GO TO condenet.com/books/bonappetit.



"/ MY FRIEND GENEVIEVE'S MOM TOOK US TO **FAHRENHEIT** IN CLEVELAND TO CELEBRATE GENEVIEVE'S GRADUATION. WE SHARED AN AMAZING FIG-AND-ARUGULA PIZZA THAT WE REALLY ENJOYED. I WOULD LOVE TO KNOW HOW THE CHEF DOES IT.

—Kerry Howell • Lakewood, OH

pizza with figs and arugula

MAKES FOUR INDIVIDUAL 8- TO 9-INCH-DIAMETER PIZZAS/

- **1 cup warm water (105°F to 115°F), divided**
- **1 teaspoon honey**
- **1 envelope active dry yeast**
- **2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- **1½ teaspoons coarse kosher salt**
- **3 cups (or more) all purpose flour**
- **Cornmeal (for sprinkling)**
- **1 cup grated Fontina cheese**
- **1 cup grated mozzarella cheese**
- **½ cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- **12 quartered fresh figs**
- **1 3-ounce package thinly sliced prosciutto, each slice torn into strips**
- **6 ounces triple-cream cheese (such as Saint André, Mt. Tam, or triple-cream Brie), cut into ¼-inch-thick slices**
- **4 cups (lightly packed) arugula**
- **6 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh basil**

Stir ½ cup warm water and honey in large bowl to dissolve. Stir in yeast; let stand until yeast dissolves and mixture looks foamy, about 8 minutes. Add remaining ½ cup warm water, oil, and 1½ teaspoons coarse salt. Gradually mix in 3 cups flour. Knead in bowl until dough comes together. Transfer to lightly floured work surface and knead until dough is very smooth and elastic, sprinkling with additional flour if dough is sticky, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to lightly oiled bowl; turn to coat. Cover with plastic wrap and kitchen towel and let rise in warm, draft-free area until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 500°F. Place 1 heavy large baking sheet (upside down if rimmed) in oven and heat 45 minutes.

Knead dough in bowl. Divide into 4 equal portions. Form each portion into ball. Sprinkle 2 unrimmed baking sheets with cornmeal. Mix Fontina, mozzarella, and Parmesan in large bowl.

Roll out and stretch 1 dough round on lightly floured surface to 8- to 9-inch round. Place 1 dough round atop cornmeal on each prepared sheet. Sprinkle ¼ of cheese mixture over each pizza, leaving ½-inch border around edges.

Slide pizzas, 1 at a time, from unrimmed baking sheets onto hot baking sheet, centering 1 on each end of hot baking sheet. Bake pizzas until cheese mixture melts and browns in spots and crust is golden brown, about 10 minutes.

Transfer pizzas to plates; return baking sheet to oven. Scatter ¼ of figs, ¼ of prosciutto, and ¼ of triple-cream cheese over each pizza. Sprinkle 1 cup of arugula and 1½ tablespoons basil over each.

Repeat rolling and stretching, topping, and baking with remaining 2 dough rounds and remaining toppings.

My husband and I took our four kids and three of their friends to Disneyland a few months ago. Because they're teenagers, we were able to leave them on their own one evening while we sneaked off for a special dinner at STEAKHOUSE 55 in the Disneyland Hotel. I will never forget the berries with buttermilk sorbet my husband and I had for dessert.

—Rachel Luna • Milwaukee, WI

mixed berries with chambord and buttermilk sorbet

4 SERVINGS/

- **1 cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar**
- **1 cup water**
- **2 cups buttermilk**
- **1 tablespoon egg white (from 1 egg), whisked until foamy**
- **1 pound mixed berries (such as raspberries, stemmed strawberries, blueberries, and blackberries)**
- **¾ cup Chambord or other black raspberry liqueur**

Bring sugar and 1 cup water to boil in small saucepan, stirring until sugar dissolves. Simmer syrup 5 minutes; cool completely.

Mix buttermilk, egg white, and syrup in bowl to blend. Process buttermilk mixture in ice cream maker according to manufacturer's instructions. Transfer sorbet to container and freeze. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 8 hours ahead. Keep frozen.

Combine 1 pound mixed berries with Chambord in large bowl. Cover and chill 3 hours, occasionally stirring gently.

Divide mixed berries with juices among bowls. Top with sorbet and serve. /▸▸

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

I celebrated my birthday in Las Vegas with a few girlfriends. The first night, we hung out at the FONTANA BAR & LOUNGE inside the Bellagio hotel. I started off with the Nueva Vida, a refreshing and tasty rum cocktail I'd certainly want to have again.

—Ariel Campano • Tucson, AZ

nueva vida

1 SERVING / *Velvet Falernum is an alcoholic syrup flavored with lime, vanilla, and spices such as clove and allspice. It comes from Barbados, and is a staple in many classic rum cocktails. Look for it in well-stocked liquor stores.*

- **¼ cup pineapple juice**
- **3 tablespoons Oronoco rum or 10 Cane rum**
- **1½ tablespoons Velvet Falernum**
- **1½ tablespoons amaretto**
- **4 teaspoons fresh lime juice**
- **1 cup ice cubes**
- **Freshly grated nutmeg**
- **1 pineapple spear or wedge with skin**
- **1 mint sprig**

Pour pineapple juice, rum, Velvet Falernum, amaretto, and lime juice into cocktail shaker. Add ice. Shake vigorously and transfer drink with ice to 1 old-fashioned glass. Sprinkle top with freshly grated nutmeg. Garnish with pineapple spear and mint sprig.

A few of my business clients were in town for a meeting and asked that I take them out for dinner. I decided to try CASCADIA RESTAURANT, where we had a fabulous lemon cake with lemon-thyme sauce. I loved the sweet, syrupy sauce, which balanced the tartness of the cake perfectly. My clients were really impressed and couldn't get enough of it.

—Leon Tam • Seattle

lemon custard cakes with lemon curd sauce and lemon-thyme syrup

MAKES 6 / *The extra lemon-thyme syrup would be delicious stirred into iced tea or drizzled over ice cream. Or have it with pancakes, waffles, or French toast.*

LEMON-THYME SYRUP

- **2 cups sugar**
- **1 cup water**
- **12 3- to 4-inch-long fresh thyme sprigs**
- **1 tablespoon finely grated lemon peel**

LEMON CURD SAUCE

- **1 cup sugar**
- **4 large egg yolks**
- **½ cup fresh lemon juice**
- **¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, diced**
- **1 tablespoon finely grated lemon peel**
- **⅛ teaspoon salt**

CAKES

- **¼ cup cake flour**
- **2 tablespoons semolina flour (pasta flour)***
- **⅛ teaspoon salt**
- **1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice**
- **2 teaspoons finely grated lemon peel**
- **¼ teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **3 large eggs, separated**
- **8 tablespoons sugar, divided**
- **¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, melted**
- **6 tablespoons whole milk**
- **⅛ teaspoon cream of tartar**
- **Whipped cream (optional)**

LEMON-THYME SYRUP/ Bring sugar and 1 cup water to boil in medium saucepan, stirring until sugar dissolves. Reduce heat; simmer 5 minutes. Add thyme sprigs and lemon peel; remove from heat, cover, and let steep 30 minutes. Keep covered and chill. DO AHEAD Can be made 1 day ahead. Keep chilled.

LEMON CURD SAUCE/ Stir sugar and egg yolks in medium saucepan until blended. Add lemon juice, butter, lemon peel, and salt. Stir constantly over medium heat until mixture is thick and registers 185°F to 190°F on candy thermometer, about 5 minutes (do not boil). Pour into bowl; cover and chill. DO AHEAD Can be made 2 days ahead. Keep chilled.

CAKES/ Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter six ¾-cup custard cups and dust with sugar. Whisk cake flour, semolina flour, and salt in small bowl. Whisk lemon juice, lemon peel, and vanilla in another small bowl. Whisk egg yolks and 2 tablespoons sugar in large bowl until very thick, about 3 minutes. Whisk in melted butter, then lemon mixture. Whisk in dry ingredients, then milk. Using electric mixer, beat egg whites and cream of tartar in medium bowl until peaks form. Gradually beat in remaining 6 tablespoons sugar; beat until stiff but not dry. Fold egg white mixture into batter in 3 additions. Divide batter among prepared cups. Place cups in 13x9x2-inch metal baking pan. Add enough warm water to pan to come ¼ inch up sides of cups.

Bake cakes until tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 30 minutes. Cool 10 minutes. Cut around edges of cakes. Invert cakes onto plates. DO AHEAD Can be made 2 hours ahead.

Spoon lemon curd sauce alongside warm or room-temperature cakes. Drizzle each cake with lemon-thyme syrup and serve with a dollop of whipped cream, if desired.

*/ Available at some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Italian markets.

While I was visiting family in Venice, my uncle took me to a husband-and-wife-run trattoria in the northern Cannaregio district called OSTERIA ANICE STELLATO. We shared several dishes, but I especially enjoyed my pasta cooked in an anchovy sauce. I want to make this at home.

—Eric Moretti • Key West, FL

bigoli with onion-anchovy sauce

6 SERVINGS/ *This authentic pasta dish has a tasty, pronounced anchovy flavor. For a milder version, cut back on the anchovies. Bigoli are long, hollow, whole wheat noodles.*

- **10 tablespoons (1¼ sticks) butter**
- **3 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- **1 pound onions, thinly sliced**
- **3 tablespoons (or more) water**
- **6 ounces anchovy fillets packed in oil, drained, coarsely chopped, or 12 ounces salted anchovies, rinsed, coarsely chopped**
- **1 pound bigoli or spaghetti**

Melt butter with oil in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Add onions and sauté until beginning to turn golden, stirring frequently, about 10 minutes. Add 3 tablespoons water, stir, and cover. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook until onions turn golden brown, stirring occasionally and adding more water as needed to prevent onions from sticking, about 5 minutes. Add anchovies to onions; stir to coat. Cover and simmer until anchovies dissolve, stirring frequently, about 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook bigoli in large pot of boiling salted water until tender but still firm to bite, stirring occasionally. Drain. Return pasta to pot.

Mix anchovy mixture into pasta. Season generously with pepper and serve. / ▸▸

Connecticut was the last place I thought I'd get good New Mexican food, but while visiting a friend in Greenwich, I had these yummy flautas at BOXCAR CANTINA. The filling had pinto beans, which I had never had in flautas before, and with the guacamole and salsa, the whole dish was out of this world. I plan on making them for a dinner party.

—Janny Gibralter • Albuquerque, NM

chicken flautas with chipotle crema

MAKES 12/ *This recipe requires ingredients commonly used in Latin dishes. Look for fresh Anaheim chiles (also known as California chiles) in the produce section and New Mexico chile powder in the spice aisle at many supermarkets, and at specialty foods stores and Latin markets.*

- **1 cup sour cream**
- **1 tablespoon (or more) minced canned chipotle chiles in adobo***
- **4 fresh Anaheim chiles**
- **5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- **6 garlic cloves, pressed, divided**
- **2 teaspoons dried oregano (preferably Mexican)**
- **2 15-ounce cans pinto beans, drained, liquid reserved**
- **2 tablespoons plus 1 cup chopped fresh cilantro**
- **3 tablespoons New Mexico chile powder**
- **3 tablespoons fresh lime juice**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **3 large chicken breasts with skin and bones (1½ to 2 pounds)**
- **12 6- to 7-inch-diameter corn tortillas**
- **12 6x¼x¼-inch strips extra-sharp cheddar cheese (about 8 ounces)**
- **Vegetable oil (for deep-frying)**
- **Guacamole**
- **Salsa**

Whisk 1 cup sour cream and 1 tablespoon minced canned chipotles in small bowl for chipotle crema, mixing in additional minced canned chipotles as desired for hotter sauce. Season chipotle crema to taste with salt. Char Anaheim chiles over gas flame or in broiler until blackened on all sides. Transfer chiles to plastic or paper bag; seal and let stand 15 minutes to cool. Peel and seed blackened chiles. Cut chiles into ¼-inch-thick strips. **DO AHEAD** Crema and chiles can be made 1 day ahead. Cover separately and chill.

Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in heavy medium skillet over medium-low heat. Add 3 pressed garlic cloves and oregano; stir 1 minute. Remove from heat. Add drained pinto beans and ¼ cup reserved bean liquid. Using potato masher, crush beans until coarsely mashed, adding more liquid by tablespoonfuls if too dry. Season mixture to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.

Puree remaining 1 cup chopped cilantro, 3 pressed garlic cloves, 3 tablespoons olive oil, 3 tablespoons New Mexico chile powder, 3 tablespoons lime juice, and 1 teaspoon salt in processor. Transfer pureed marinade to resealable plastic bag. Add chicken to bag; seal bag and turn over to coat well. Let marinate at room temperature 2 hours, turning bag occasionally.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Transfer chicken with some marinade still clinging to rimmed baking sheet. Roast marinated chicken until cooked through, about 35 minutes. Cool. Cut chicken into ¼-inch strips, discarding bones. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.

Stack 4 tortillas and heat in microwave 30 seconds to soften. Spoon generous 2 tablespoons pinto bean mixture down center of each tortilla. Top with 2 to 3 chicken strips. Place 1 cheese strip atop chicken, then top with 3 to 4 chile strips. Tightly roll tortillas around filling, securing with toothpicks. Repeat with remaining tortillas, pinto beans, chicken, cheese, and chile strips.

Add enough oil to heavy large pot to reach depth of 1 inch. Attach deep-fry thermometer to pot and heat over medium heat to 360°F to 370°F. Working with 4 flautas at a time, fry until tortillas are crisp and golden brown, turning often, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain. Place flautas on plates and serve with guacamole, salsa, and chipotle crema.

*/ Dried, smoked jalapeños in a spicy tomato sauce called adobo; available at some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Latin markets.

A while back, I tasted a superb espresso-flavored crème brûlée at REBECCA'S, a Cuban restaurant in Edgewater, New Jersey. I am usually not satisfied with custard desserts, but I decided to give this one a shot. You get a nice, strong espresso aroma with each bite. It's a sophisticated dessert, and I would love to know how it is made.

—Arabelle Bullock • Worcester, MA

cuban espresso crème brûlée

MAKES 6/ *To prevent the ramekins from slipping when transporting them in and out of the oven, line the bottom of a baking pan with a kitchen towel and place the ramekins on top before placing the baking pan in the oven.*

- **¾ cup ground espresso beans**
- **1¾ cups water**
- **2 cups heavy whipping cream**
- **½ cup plus 6 teaspoons sugar**
- **6 large egg yolks**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

Preheat oven to 350°F. Brew espresso in coffeemaker with 1¾ cups water according to manufacturer's instructions. Bring cream and ½ cup sugar to simmer in medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring to dissolve sugar. Remove mixture from heat. Whisk egg yolks and vanilla in medium bowl. Gradually whisk in warm espresso; whisk in cream mixture. Strain into 4-cup glass measuring cup. Divide mixture among six ¾-cup ramekins or custard cups.

Line 13x9x2-inch metal baking pan with kitchen towel. Place ramekins on towel in pan. Add enough warm water to pan to come halfway up sides of ramekins. Bake until custard is barely set in center, about 40 minutes. Remove ramekins from water bath. Chill custard uncovered overnight. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 days ahead. Cover ramekins and keep chilled.

Sprinkle 1 teaspoon sugar over each custard. Using kitchen torch, melt sugar until caramelized. Alternatively, set custards on rimmed baking sheet and place under broiler until caramelized. Chill at least 15 minutes and up to 1 hour to allow sugar to set.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

During a trip to Paris, my husband and I dined at L'AMBASSADE D'AUVERGNE, which specializes in the foods of the Auvergne region. I devoured the Green Lentil Salad with Bacon and Ham, which was perfect for a cold, rainy night.

—Lorilee Polluck • Margate City, NJ

green lentil salad with bacon and ham

8 SERVINGS/ *The lentils are cooked in bacon drippings, then the bacon and mustard vinaigrette are added, making this a very hearty fall salad.*

- **2 tablespoons red wine vinegar**
- **1 tablespoon Dijon mustard**
- **½ cup hazelnut oil**
- **1 pound French green lentils,* rinsed**
- **4 ounces thick-cut bacon, cut crosswise into ½-inch-thick strips**
- **1 cup chopped onion plus 3 tablespoons finely chopped onion**
- **¾ cup chopped ham (about 4 ounces)**
- **2 large fresh thyme sprigs**
- **1 bay leaf**
- **4 cups water**
- **¼ cup chopped fresh Italian parsley**

Whisk vinegar and mustard in small bowl. Gradually whisk in oil. Season dressing with salt and pepper.

Place lentils in large saucepan. Add enough cold water to cover by 2 inches. Bring to boil; drain. Cook bacon in same saucepan over medium heat until crisp around edges. Using slotted spoon, transfer bacon to paper towels. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons drippings from saucepan. Heat drippings over medium-high heat. Add 1 cup chopped onion and ham. Cook until onion is translucent, about 2 minutes. Add thyme sprigs, bay leaf, and drained lentils; stir to coat. Add 4 cups water; bring to boil, reduce heat to medium, cover with lid ajar, and simmer until lentils are tender, about 25 minutes. Drain if needed; return lentils to pan. Add mustard dressing, bacon, and parsley; toss to coat. Season lentil salad with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature.

Spoon warm or room-temperature lentil salad onto platter. Sprinkle 3 tablespoons finely chopped onion over and serve.

*/ Available at some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores.

A friend of mine went to San Pedro, Belize, for her honeymoon and stayed at VICTORIA HOUSE on the island of Ambergris Caye. She could not stop raving about the delicious granola she had every morning. I'd like to surprise her with the recipe for her birthday and keep a copy for myself!

—Saehoon Kwon • Poughkeepsie, NY

granola with cashews, dried fruit, and wheat germ

MAKES ABOUT 3½ CUPS/ *Don't stop at breakfast—pack this healthy and flavorful mix for a hike or an afternoon snack; the nutritious blend of dried fruit, whole grains, and nuts will keep you energized.*

- **1 cup old-fashioned oats**
- **¼ cup wheat germ**
- **¼ cup sweetened flaked coconut**
- **¼ cup coarsely broken cashews**
- **¼ cup coarsely broken walnuts or pecans**
- **3 teaspoons sesame seeds**
- **¼ cup pure maple syrup**
- **2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- **2 tablespoons light corn syrup**
- **1 tablespoon mild-flavored (light) molasses**
- **½ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **¼ cup raisins**
- **¼ cup chopped dried apricots**

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix first 6 ingredients in large bowl. Whisk maple syrup and next 4 ingredients in medium bowl. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients; stir to coat evenly. Transfer to large rimmed baking sheet, spreading out in even layer. Bake 15 minutes; stir. Bake until golden brown, about 15 minutes longer. Mix in raisins and apricots. Bake until fruit is heated through and granola is slightly darker, about 10 minutes longer. Cool completely on sheet. Transfer to airtight container. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 week ahead. Store at room temperature.

—Compiled by Diane Chang and Janet Taylor McCracken

STARTERS

EDITED BY HUGH GARVEY

QUICK BITES FROM THE WORLD OF BON APPÉTIT

THE CHERNER ARMCHAIR IS AN AMERICAN DESIGN ICON THAT REINTERPRETS THE CLASSIC BISTRO CHAIR.

For more about it and where to buy, see page 48.



*NEW COLUMN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMIE CHUNG

OUR TOP PICKS/

chefs' secret ingredients

All good cooks have them: trusty helpers that lift up flavors and work a little magic. When we asked some of our favorite chefs about what they most rely on to give a dish that extra something, we got more great ideas than we had room for. Here are the standouts. (For additional secret ingredients from chefs, go to bonappetit.com/go/ingredients.)



1/ NATE APPLEMAN, A16 and **SPQR**
San Francisco

WHAT/ Tutto Calabria chiles; *$9 for 10 ounces; 415-921-7873 or lucadeli.com.*
WHY/ "For mild spice with an underlying sweetness and acidity."
HOW/ Chopped, in vinaigrettes, soups, potatoes, stews, tuna conserves, and even chocolate *budino*. Also good deep-fried.

2/ PICHET ONG, P*ONG and **BATCH**
New York

WHAT/ Farmstead milk from Manhattan Milk (an Amish farm cooperative); *$5 per quart; 917-388-2713 or manhattanmilk.com for stores.*
WHY/ "For rich, almost beefy flavor that gives desserts a full, savory overtone."
HOW/ Puddings, frostings, cakes, ice milk, mousses.



3/ SHAWN McCLAIN, SPRING RESTAURANT, GREEN ZEBRA, and **CUSTOM HOUSE**
Chicago

WHAT/ Yuzu juice, from the rare and aromatic Japanese citrus fruit; *$12 for 4 ounces; 866-765-2433 or chefsresource.com.*
WHY/ "It adds a floral quality, multiple citrus flavors, and depth."
HOW/ Sauces and sashimi-type dishes.



4/ ANITA LO, ANNISA and **BAR Q**
New York

WHAT/ Healthy Boy Soy Sauce with Mushroom; *$4 for 24 ounces; 877-811-8773 or templeofthai.com.*
WHY/ "Just a little rounds out a one-dimensional dish. But add too much, and it ends up tasting like mushrooms and soy sauce."
HOW/ Stir-fries, meat braises, and soups.



5/ FRANK STITT, HIGHLANDS BAR AND GRILL, BOTTEGA, and **CHEZ FONFON**
Birmingham, Alabama

WHAT/ Sorghum syrup; *$5 per pint; 931-445-3589 or muddypondsorghum.com.*
WHY/ "A cross between molasses and maple syrup, it gives a funky, southern sweetness and a touch of bitter, too."
HOW/ Pan sauces, vinaigrettes, and reductions.



6/ CHARLES PHAN, THE SLANTED DOOR
San Francisco

WHAT/ Three Crabs Fish Sauce; *$7 for 24 ounces; 888-618-8424 or importfood.com.*
WHY/ "It adds briny body, which is essential to Vietnamese cooking. The sauce is rounder than others and also has a subtle sweetness."
HOW/ Stir-fries and Asian noodle dishes.

—AMY ALBERT

JAMIE CHUNG

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

What makes a great valet?
When someone turns over the keys to their car, a good valet understands that this is one of their chief assets and that they should respect it, meaning: Don't roll down the windows, don't change the radio station, don't move anything around. Good valets understand that they control the first and last impressions of the restaurant.

Joyrides: fact or myth?
Myth. But sometimes, out of necessity, some companies will use a customer's vehicle to shuttle maybe two or three valets to a lot or an area to retrieve other vehicles. However, if any of my employees did this, it would be grounds for termination.

When should a customer say no to the option of valet parking?
If the valets are hanging around, smoking cigarettes, and there is no real podium, I would keep driving. It sounds silly, but presentation is everything. A lot of valet companies employ people who don't have driver's licenses and are paid cash. Another good way to gauge if it is a reputable valet business is the sign. If it's handwritten or looks 100 years old, chances are these are the companies that would deny a claim if your car gets damaged.

There is usually one coveted spot at all restaurants, known as the "jewel case," which is right in front and seems to be occupied by some of the fancier cars. Who gets these spots?
Usually, regular guests of a restaurant who are there one or more times a week and who have made it clear to the valet that they will be gracious in their gratuity (and gracious could be anything from $20 to $100). Some restaurants will say that they want the most expensive and best-looking cars up front, because it reflects well on the restaurant, but those are not necessarily the customers who tip best.

Tipping question: Do coins count?
Even though it is the same amount, the perception of a fistful of change doesn't bode well. ~ERIC STEINMAN



EXPERT ADVICE FROM/

the valet

BRAD SALTZMAN
President, Regent Parking, Los Angeles; regentparking.com

After witnessing one too many nightmare valet operations, Saltzman started Regent Parking in 2005 with just himself and one other trusty valet parking cars. He has since built a valet service that parks cars at some of Los Angeles's finest restaurants, including Osteria Mozza, Chateau Marmont, and Daily Grill.

GROOMING BY VICTORIA JACKSON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREGG SEGAL/

Dear BA Foodist,

I make my own po'boys. I've traveled to Miami in search of the perfect *cubano*. But now that even the once-glorious panini is available in a degraded form at drive-throughs everywhere, I'm on the lookout for the next great sandwich. What is it?

—RUBEN LESS, *Cincinnati*



Bánh mì, the Foodist's favorite sandwich.

Dear Ruben,
I feel your panini pain. While a specimen I encountered recently at JFK airport tasted like salted tissue paper pressed between two biodegradable sponges, there's still hope on a roll.

First, though, let us take a moment to praise the patron saint of subs, grinders, and hoagies—John Montagu, a.k.a. the 4th Earl of Sandwich—creator of the fine art of stuffing sliced bread with just about any ingredient imaginable. Without him, there would be no *croque-monsieur,* no *pan bagnat,* and, I shudder to think, no BLT.

Which brings me to my current favorite sandwich, the French-inspired Vietnamese creation called *bánh mì.* Born during the French colonization of Vietnam, the *bánh mì* is fusion food done right: French baguette (made in Vietnam with rice flour for a light, extra-crunchy texture that's crucial to the sandwich's success), pâté (or other type of meat, including meatballs or roast pork), and mayonnaise are followed by cilantro, pickled vegetables, hot peppers, a splash of fish sauce, and any number of other Vietnamese touches. The result is a crunchy, sweet, spicy, acidic, rich, multi-textured snack that I can't get enough of.

I regularly order the classic version made with thinly sliced grilled pork chop at my local watering hole, Sidecar, in Brooklyn (sidecarbrooklyn.com). But I'd be just as happy eating more interpretive varieties of *bánh mì,* like the one made with all-American bison at Basa in Louisville (basarestaurant.net) or the barbecued-eel version at Sea Salt in Berkeley (seasaltrestaurant.com).

What the cheeseburger is to America, the *bánh mì* is to Vietnam—there are hundreds of possible variations. The Foodist predicts that one day there will be a chain in the States selling all types of *bánh mì.* They're that good. And when we've had our fill, our search for the next great sandwich will begin again.

Cool apron: Look and cook like a Brit.



Dear BA Foodist,
Is there such a thing as a cool apron?
—TAI WANAN, *Alhambra, CA*

Dear Tai,
For years, I refused to wear an apron in the kitchen. Aprons were for dorks. I was too cool. That is, until Thanksgiving 2006: Expensive new shirt. Hot turkey fat. You get the picture.

Today, I put on an apron whenever I'm making anything more complicated than cereal. But not just any apron. I still won't sport anything emblazoned with "Licensed to Grill" or "Danger: Men Cooking," and a white chef's coat seems pretentious and unearned.

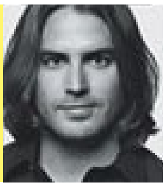
The only apron for the Foodist is a traditional British butcher's apron, beloved by many of today's top London chefs (British butcher's apron; $29; conranusa.com).

Chef Fergus Henderson and his staff at St. John restaurant in London wear them. So does U.K. food activist Hugh-Fearnley Whittingstall. You've probably seen them before—navy blue with vertical white stripes. They camouflage food stains and convey a certain I'm-just-a-guy-who-cooks-simple-food attitude.

Dear BA Foodist,
I've seen you eat just about everything as a judge on *Iron Chef America*. Is there anything you can't stand?
—AN OMNIVOROUS FAN, *Grosse Point, MI*

Dear Fan,
Kidneys. I'm all for offal, but this is one organ I eat begrudgingly. Green bell peppers. I love every type of pepper with the exception of this one; it brings nothing to the party save for a funky, overbearing, sometimes bitter flavor. Want to ruin a dish for me? Throw in some raw green bell pepper. And hummus. I can't bear it. Let me clarify: I can't bear the processed, insipid version that has become America's new favorite healthy convenience food. Even the homemade versions I've tried taste like wet cardboard. I'll have peanut butter instead.

The BA Foodist is Restaurant Editor Andrew Knowlton. Contact him with questions at bafoodist@bonappetit.com and read his blog at bonappetit.com/go/bafoodist.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: JAMIE CHUNG; HENRY LEUTWYLER; CNP DIGITAL STUDIO

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.



the mix/

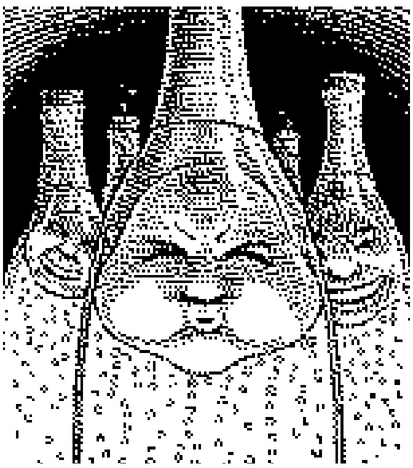
THE WIDOW'S TOUCH

We've discovered the ultimate fall cocktail—something warming, strong, and sophisticated. The Widow's Touch, created by John Gertsen of Boston's No. 9 Park, is an apple-floral riff on the 19th-century Widow's Kiss. Gertsen's version substitutes Laird's Applejack for Calvados and St-Germain elderflower liqueur for the Yellow Chartreuse liqueur found in the original recipe.
—Andrew Knowlton

MAKES 2

- *1 cup ice cubes*
- *5 tablespoons Laird's Applejack*
- *3 tablespoons St-Germain (elderflower liqueur)*
- *1 tablespoon Bénédictine liqueur*
- *2 dashes of angostura bitters*

Place ice cubes in cocktail shaker. Add remaining ingredients and stir 20 to 30 seconds. Strain into 2 chilled small coupe glasses and serve.



the method/

KEEPING THE SPARKLE ALIVE

A friend recently asked how long she could store an opened bottle of Champagne or sparkling wine in the fridge. While it's best to consume the bottle within hours of opening for optimal freshness, there are two options for storing bubbly in the refrigerator. The first, and most effective, is a Champagne stopper, which hermetically seals in freshness and effervescence for up to four days. The second method, frowned upon by wine snobs the world over and dismissed as an old wives' tale, is to dangle the handle of a silver or silver-plated spoon into the bottle. I've found that the bubbly retains its fizz for about 24 hours, though it's admittedly not as sprightly as when it was initially opened. But it is a fun and stylish party trick. Better yet, to avoid the issue altogether, finish the bottle—or look for producers offering half-bottles (375 ml) or half-splits (187 ml). *—Heather John*

the sipping news/

SHERRY

The pride of Jerez, Spain, and the de facto tipple of tapas bars, Sherry has started popping up on wine lists across the country. The fortified wine is affordable (some say it's the best value in the wine world), versatile (it can be consumed as an aperitif or a digestif, or with food), and available in a range of styles—from dry fino to sweet Pedro Ximénez. Here are five styles of food-friendly Sherries and their perfect pairings. *—A.K.*



El Maestro Sierra Pedro Ximénez, $16 Made from Pedro Ximénez grapes, this classic dessert wine smells and tastes like liquid raisins. Silky smooth texture and perfectly balanced. PAIR WITH: Vanilla ice cream and chocolate cake.



Lustau "Papirusa" Manzanilla, $16 Manzanilla is the lightest and most delicate style of Sherry and is aged in the seaside town of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, which explains its crisp and briny profile. PAIR WITH: Manchego cheese or sushi.



Bodegas Hidalgo La Gitana "Napoleon" Amontillado, $23 This amber-colored amontillado has a sweet fragrance, but in the mouth it's super-dry with pecan flavors. PAIR WITH: Olives and Spanish ham.



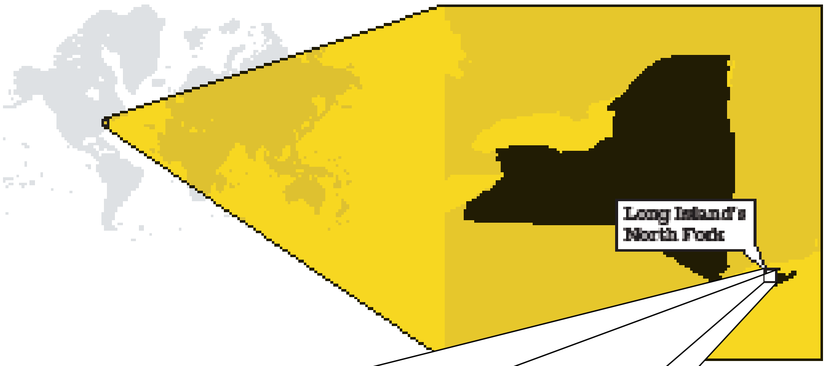
González Byass "Matusalem" Oloroso Dulce, $28 A mahogany-colored sweet oloroso aged 30 years in oak, with dried cranberry on the nose and palate. PAIR WITH: Cabrales blue cheese or banana bread.



Emilio Hidalgo "Marqués de Rodil" Palo Cortado, $38 This Palo Cortado, a rare Sherry style, has the lively acidity of an amontillado and the rich, walnut finish of an oloroso. PAIR WITH: Roast chicken or clams with chorizo.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JAMIE CHUNG; CNP DIGITAL STUDIO (5); GREGORY NEMEC

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.





Pruning the vines at Shinn Estate; breakfast at Shinn Estate Farmhouse; the North Fork's Route 25 leads to wineries and quaint towns with amazing food.





NAVIGATOR/

north fork, long island

If you share a travel mantra with poet Robert Frost, who famously took the road less traveled, you'll love New York's North Fork on Long Island. While its slick cousin to the south, the Hamptons, is home to mansions and polo parties, the North Fork is known for its farms, wineries, and quaint towns. Factor in organic farmstands, destination dining, and perfect fried chicken, and the road less traveled becomes a lot more delicious.

~ANDREW KNOWLTON

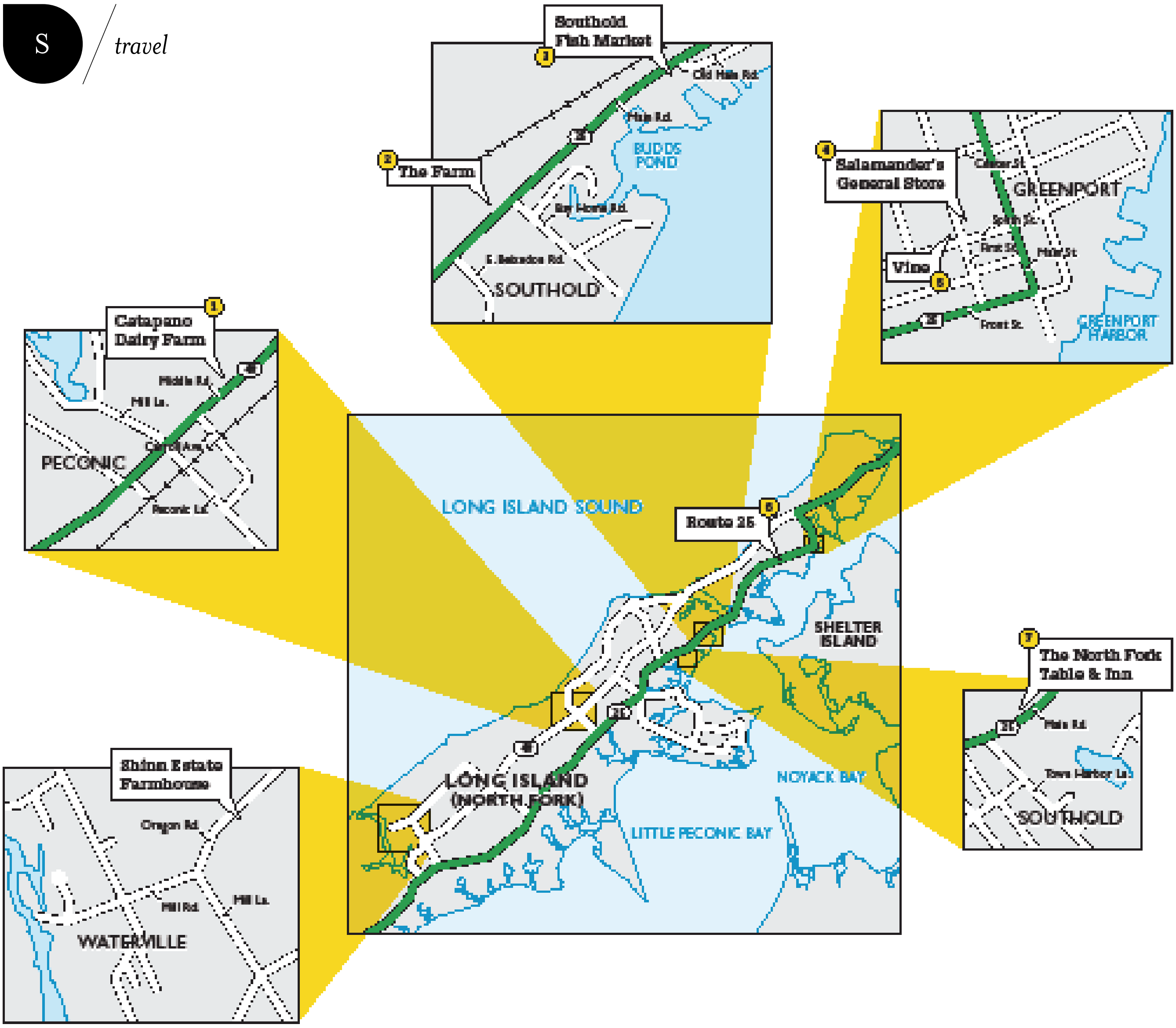
GO/

Located 100 miles east of New York City, the North Fork can be reached by car, bus (*hamptonjitney.com*), or train (*mta.info*).

STAY/

Barbara Shinn and David Page produce biodynamic wines at Shinn Estate Vineyards. They also run a charming inn, Shinn Estate Farmhouse. The rooms have farm views, but the amazing breakfasts are reason enough for a stay. Prepared by Shinn and Page, former owners of Home restaurant in Manhattan, they feature dishes like mushroom risotto with duck egg, bacon, and garden herbs./ *2000 Oregon Road, Mattituck; 631-804-0367; shinnfarmhouse.com* / ▸▸

ILLUSTRATION BY ALAN KIKUCHI; PHOTOGRAPHY BY RANDY HARRIS



PICKS/

❶ Catapano Dairy Farm
At this mom-and-pop operation, run by Karen and Michael Catapano, you can see the goats and personally thank them for the delicious chèvre, feta, yogurt, and ricotta sold there. If you can't make it to the farm to buy cheese, not to worry: Many of the area's better restaurants feature it on their menus./ *33705 North Road, Peconic; 631-765-8042; catapanodairyfarm.com*

❷ The Farm
There are no farmers' markets on the North Fork. Instead, there are farmstands—lots of them. One of the best is The Farm, in Southold on Route 25. All of KK Haspel's produce is biodynamically grown on her small farm just behind the stand. In late summer, look for two dozen varieties of heirloom tomatoes, summer squash, and edamame./ *59945 Main Road, Southold; 631-765-2075*

❸ Southold Fish Market
Charlie Manwaring, a third-generation fisherman, owns the bare-bones shop where he's worked for over 20 years. Yellowtail flounder, weakfish, fluke, monkfish, and other whole fish arrive fresh off the boat. Look for Pipes Cove oysters and Long Island's prize catch, striped bass./ *61850 Main Road, Southold; 631-765-3200*

❹ Salamander's General Store
The perfect fried chicken at this funky take-out-joint-cum-upscale-market is ideal for a picnic at one of the nearby beaches./ *414 First Street, Greenport; 631-477-3711*

❺ Vine
Just across the street from Salamander's, this urbane wine bar is a second home to many of the area's top winemakers. They come for the smart wine list (with bottles from near and far), the eclectic menu (duck confit and goat cheese quesadillas; local Widow's Hole oysters), and the laid-back vibe on the porch./ *100 South Street, Greenport; 631-477-6238; vinewinebar.com*

❻ Route 25
Known to locals as Main Road, this stretch of highway is home to many of the North Fork's 30 wineries. With talk of the 2007 vintage as the best ever, it's time to taste what all the fuss is about. One of the best ways to visit a few standouts is with the help of Jo-Ann Perry and her wine tours./ *631-765-4689; vintagetour1.com*

❼ The North Fork Table & Inn
Husband-and-wife chefs Gerry Hayden (ex-Aureole) and Claudia Fleming (ex-Gramercy Tavern) are behind this sophisticated spot—without question the best restaurant on Long Island. The understated elegance of the dining room—barn chic with exposed wood beams and lots of earth tones—seems ideal for the equally straightforward New American menu, which, as you would expect, relies heavily on local ingredients./ *57225 Main Road, Southold; 631-765-0177; northforktableandinn.com* / ■

ALAN KIKUCHI

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

WHY WE LOVE/

the cherner armchair

An American design icon that reinterprets the classic bistro chair



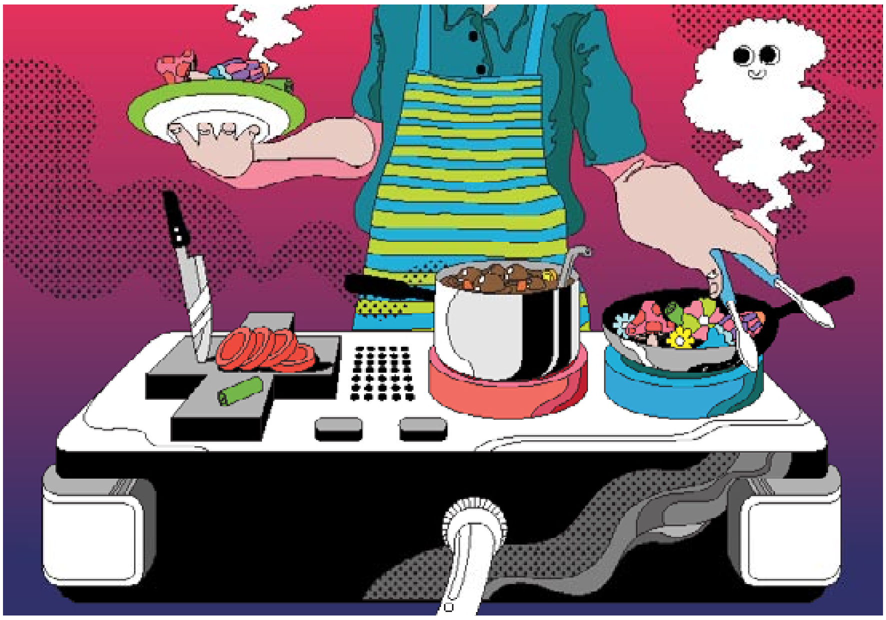
FINE LINES/ The dramatic, sweeping arms lend an almost sculptural quality to the chair, as well as comfort.

DESIGNED FOR DINING/ Look familiar? You may remember this chair from the Essex House in New York, Nobu Berkeley St in London, or any number of other stylish restaurants around the world.

MATERIAL ISSUE/ The chair's molded plywood frame of graduating thickness adds structural strength.

ONE OF THE MOST ENDURING EXAMPLES OF MID-CENTURY DESIGN, the Cherner Armchair was introduced in 1958 by Norman Cherner, who taught fine and industrial arts at Columbia University and whose work was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. His sons, Benjamin and Thomas, have reissued the plywood chair in walnut veneer from Cherner's original molds and drawings. It's a classic that will last and last—worth the splurge. *Cherner Armchair, $999; available at Design Within Reach; dwr.com* ~HEATHER JOHN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMIE CHUNG/



playlist/
ROCKING THE MENU

Diners at David Chang's latest New York restaurant, Momofuku Ko, might be surprised to find the menu of haute ingredient mash-ups (kimchi consommé, anyone?) backed by a solid roster of rock and hip-hop tunes. But what better example of Chang's inspired approach to fusion? Herewith, the deliciously eclectic music and dish pairings from a recent dinner.

1st Course / Fluke, whipped buttermilk, white soy, poppy seeds
THE SONG: **Van Halen/** DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY

2nd Course / Kimchi consommé, grilled pork belly, BeauSoleil oysters, *puntarelle*
THE SONG: **The Kinks/** DO YOU REMEMBER WALTER?

3rd Course / Scallop, Benton's bacon puree, breakfast radish, herbs, almonds
THE SONG: **Wilco/** WAR ON WAR

4th Course / Shaved foie gras, lychee, pine nuts, Riesling gelée
THE SONG: **Positive K/** I GOT A MAN

5th Course / Deep-fried short rib, pickled mustard seed, daikon
THE SONG: **Creedence Clearwater Revival/** BORN ON THE BAYOU

6th Course / Miso soup, pickled vegetables, grilled rice
THE SONG: **The Who/** YOU BETTER YOU BET

7th Course / Dried pineapple, chewy pineapple sorbet
THE SONG: **The Band/** OPHELIA

—Andrew Knowlton

tech/
GASTROGAMING

The booming video-game industry and foodie revolution have converged in new games that cater to players of all ages—and tastes. Get cooking with three culinary adventures:

HELL'S KITCHEN/ Gordon Ramsay lends his voice and likeness to this new game based on the hit reality show. To complete a dinner service, you prepare ingredients, keep track of the cooking time, and manage the dining room. Anything short of perfection could incur Ramsay's verbal wrath. Available for PC, Mac, Nintendo Wii, and Nintendo DS. *$20 for PC and Mac, $40 for Wii, $30 for DS*

COOKING MAMA: COOK OFF/ In this spin-off of the hit Nintendo DS game *Cooking Mama,* players earn medals for whipping up 55 international dishes ranging from hot dogs to borscht. Nintendo's Wii Remote becomes the ultimate kitchen tool that mashes potatoes, grinds meat, and pipes cream puff filling. Available for Nintendo Wii. *$53*

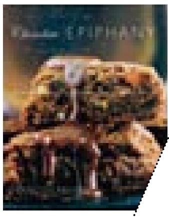
IRON CHEF AMERICA: SUPREME CUISINE/ *Iron Chef* fans, rejoice! Under the Chairman's watchful eye, now you can battle your way through cooking challenges at Kitchen Stadium. The winner's cuisine will reign supreme. Available for Nintendo Wii and handheld DS. *$40 for Wii, $30 for DS —Rachel Ng*

books/
RESTAURANT READS

This month, the best chefs around share their secrets for restaurant-worthy recipes



A16: FOOD + WINE/ Located in San Francisco's Marina district, Nate Appleman's A16 is named after the highway that cuts across Southern Italy. This first cookbook from the restaurant known for Neapolitan pizzas includes tips for getting the dough just right. There's also a lengthy regional Italian wine primer and many more popular recipes from the menu. *$35.*



CHOCOLATE EPHIPHANY/ For more than 10 years, chocolate and pastry lovers have been flocking to New York's Payard Pâtisserie and Bistro for fresh éclairs, creamy truffles, and luscious layer cakes. In his latest book, François Payard takes readers into his delicious world of desserts with easy-to-follow instructions for all of his most beloved, decadent treats. *$35.*



WINE BAR FOOD/ Specializing in wine pairings for Mediterranean small plates, this book from chef and Spiaggia co-owner Tony Mantuano and his wife, Cathy, is full of ideas for entertaining at home. Recipes include falafel crab cakes and steak *tagliata;* wine suggestions include offerings from Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece. *$28. —Elisa Huang*

CNP DIGITAL STUDIO (3)

 FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

ILLUSTRATION BY SAIMAN CHOW/



fast *easy* fresh

RECIPES BY LENA CEDERHAM BIRNBAUM, JANET TAYLOR McCRACKEN, SELMA BROWN MORROW, AND SARAH TENAGLIA

quick dishes for every-night cooking from the BON APPÉTIT *test kitchen*

brandied plum clafouti p. 56

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM SCHIERLITZ/

GOOD TO KNOW These **TURKEY SANDWICHES** contain nearly 6 grams of dietary fiber apiece./ Eating three (or more) servings of fruit a day, such as the **PLUMS** in the clafoutis, may lower your risk of age-related vision loss.



smoked turkey, blue cheese, and red onion sandwiches

PREP: 20 MINUTES/ TOTAL: 20 MINUTES/ MAKES 4

To take the sandwiches on a picnic, use ciabatta rolls—they will stay firm despite the mayo.

- **1½ tablespoons olive oil**
- **2 8- to 10-ounce red onions, cut into ⅓-inch-thick rounds**
- **3½ tablespoons red wine vinegar**
- **6 cups trimmed large arugula leaves (about 4 ounces), divided**
- **¾ cup mayonnaise**
- **8 ⅓-inch-thick slices seeded wheat bread (such as La Brea Bakery) or four ciabatta rolls, cut horizontally in half**
- **12 ounces thinly sliced smoked turkey**
- **¾ cup coarsely crumbled blue cheese (such as Maytag; about 3 ounces)**

Heat oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions and sauté until soft and lightly browned, breaking up onion rings, about 8 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in vinegar and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Chop enough arugula to measure 1 cup; place in medium bowl. Mix in mayonnaise. Season with salt and pepper. Spread about 1½ tablespoons arugula mayonnaise over each cut side of bread. Divide turkey slices among 4 bread slices. Top with crumbled blue cheese, dividing equally. Top with red onions, then whole arugula leaves and bread.

brandied plum clafoutis

PREP: 30 MINUTES/ TOTAL: 1 HOUR 15 MINUTES/ MAKES 6

These warm, pudding-like individual desserts are the perfect use for those last-of-the-season plums. If you'd like, sift some powdered sugar over the clafoutis before serving.

- **4 tablespoons (½ stick) salted butter, melted, divided**
- **1½ pounds plums, pitted; 1 plum sliced thin, others cut into ½-inch cubes**
- **7 tablespoons plus ½ cup sugar, divided**
- **4 tablespoons brandy, divided**
- **¼ cup thawed frozen orange juice concentrate**
- **½ cup (about) heavy whipping cream**
- **3 tablespoons all purpose flour**
- **2 large eggs**

Preheat oven to 375°F. Brush six 5-inch-diameter, 1-inch-high ovenproof dishes with 1 tablespoon melted butter; place dishes on rimmed baking sheet. Cook diced plums, 4 tablespoons sugar, and 2 tablespoons brandy in medium skillet over medium-high heat until juices bubble thickly, stirring often, about 5 minutes. Cover; cook until plums are just tender, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes.

Using slotted spoon, divide diced plums among prepared dishes. Add orange juice concentrate to juices in skillet; stir to blend. Pour into 1-cup measuring cup. Add remaining 2 tablespoons brandy, then enough cream to measure ¾ cup total.

Whisk ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar and flour in large bowl. Whisk in cream mixture, eggs, and remaining 3 tablespoons melted butter. Spoon batter over plums in dishes. Top with plum slices; sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon sugar.

Bake clafoutis until puffed and crusty and center is just set, about 30 minutes. Cool 15 minutes and serve warm. P. 61 /▸▸

GOOD TO KNOW **WALNUTS** (in the salad) are among the healthiest foods around. Eating them may reduce your risk for a wide variety of ailments, including Alzheimer's disease, clinical depression, heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and arthritis./ The **TORTELLINI WITH MUSHROOM SAUCE** is high in fiber, and it's vegetarian.

frisée and apple salad with dried cherries and walnuts

PREP: 15 MINUTES/ TOTAL: 15 MINUTES/ 4 SERVINGS

- **3 tablespoons olive oil**
- **2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar**
- **2 tablespoons minced shallot**
- **1 tablespoon honey**
- **½ cup (generous) dried tart cherries (one 3-ounce package)**
- **1 large head of frisée, torn into bite-size pieces (about 6 cups)**
- **1 medium Gala apple, cored, thinly sliced**
- **½ cup coarsely chopped toasted walnuts**

Whisk first 4 ingredients in small bowl to blend. Season dressing to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in dried cherries. Toss frisée and apple slices in large bowl. Add cherry dressing and toss to coat. Divide among 4 plates; sprinkle with walnuts and freshly ground black pepper and serve.

TEST-KITCHEN TIP/ *The recipe says to season the dressing to taste, but how do you know when you've added enough salt and pepper? It's easy: Just dip a small piece of lettuce (in this case, frisée) into the dressing and try it out.*





tortellini with porcini mushroom sauce

PREP: 20 MINUTES/ TOTAL: 20 MINUTES/ 4 TO 6 SERVINGS

- **1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms***
- **2 8-ounce packages dried three-cheese tortellini (such as Barilla)**
- **2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter**
- **1 cup sliced shallots**
- **4 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme, divided**
- **½ cup whipping cream**
- **¾ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, divided**

Place porcini mushrooms in 2-cup measuring cup; add enough hot water to measure 2 cups. Let stand until mushrooms are soft, about 20 minutes. Drain mushrooms, reserving soaking liquid. Coarsely chop porcini mushrooms.

Cook tortellini in large pot of boiling salted water until just tender but still firm to bite, stirring occasionally.

Meanwhile, melt butter in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add shallots; sauté until golden and tender, about 4 minutes. Add mushrooms and 3 teaspoons thyme; sauté 2 minutes. Stir in 1 cup mushroom soaking liquid and cream; boil until thickened to light sauce consistency, about 3 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Drain tortellini; return to same pot. Add mushroom mixture and toss to coat. Stir in ½ cup cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer tortellini to bowl; sprinkle with ¼ cup cheese and 1 teaspoon thyme.

*/ Available in the produce section of many supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Italian markets. /▸▸

GOOD TO KNOW A high-fiber dessert, the Iced Maple Cream with Berries calls for **MAPLE SYRUP,** an even healthier sweetener than honey. It has fewer calories and a higher concentration of minerals (such as zinc and manganese). Choose stone-ground **CORNMEAL** for the fritters. It still contains some of the corn's germ and hull.



iced maple cream with berries

PREP: 20 MINUTES/ TOTAL: 6 HOURS 20 MINUTES (INCLUDES FREEZING TIME)/ 6 SERVINGS

An incredible frozen treat that doesn't require an ice cream maker. Serve with crisp butter cookies.

- **3 large egg yolks**
- **¾ cup chilled whipping cream, divided**
- **⅓ cup pure maple syrup**
- **¼ teaspoon maple extract**
- **2 tablespoons raspberry jam**
- **3 cups mixed berries (such as blackberries, raspberries, and blueberries)**

Whisk yolks, ¼ cup cream, and syrup in medium metal bowl. Set bowl over saucepan of simmering water (do not allow bottom of bowl to touch water). Whisk constantly until candy thermometer registers 175°F, about 3 minutes. Remove bowl from over water. Using electric mixer, beat mixture until cool and thick, about 3 minutes.

Whip remaining ½ cup cream and maple extract in large bowl to soft peaks. Fold whipped cream into yolk mixture. Cover and freeze maple cream until firm, at least 6 hours or overnight.

Whisk jam in medium bowl to loosen. Add berries; toss to coat and let stand 15 minutes. Spoon berry mixture into dishes; top with maple cream.

fried polenta cheese fritters

PREP: 40 MINUTES/ TOTAL: 2 HOURS 40 MINUTES (INCLUDES COOLING TIME)/ MAKES 24

This easy, indulgent appetizer comes from cookbook author Daisy Martinez. The fritter batter can be made one day ahead.

- **1½ cups yellow cornmeal**
- **½ cup all purpose flour**
- **¼ cup sugar**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1 cup whole milk**
- **1 cup water**
- **½ cup (packed) coarsely grated Edam cheese (about 3 ounces)**
- **1½ cups canola oil**
- **Chopped fresh parsley**

Lightly oil 8x8x2-inch metal baking pan. Whisk first 4 ingredients in bowl. Bring milk and 1 cup water to boil in large saucepan over medium-high heat. Gradually whisk in dry ingredients. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until very thick, whisking constantly, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Mix in cheese. Transfer batter to prepared pan; press to even layer. Chill until cold.

Cut fritter batter into 3 strips. Cut each strip crosswise into 8 rectangles. Turn rectangles out of pan onto work surface. Heat oil in medium skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, add fritters to skillet and sauté until golden brown, about 5 minutes per side. Transfer fritters to paper towels to drain. Arrange fritters on platter. Sprinkle with parsley and serve hot.



FIND NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION FOR EVERY "FAST EASY FRESH" RECIPE AT bonappetit.com/go/fasteasyfresh.

GOOD TO KNOW
ARTICHOKES are a good source of vitamin C, folate, potassium, and magnesium. And the soup itself is high in fiber and low in cholesterol./ **QUINOA** (pronounced *KEEN-wa*) is the seed of an Andean plant related to spinach. It has recently gained in popularity, thanks to its crunchy texture, nutty flavor, and health benefits. Quinoa provides a complete protein: It contains all nine essential amino acids.



french toast with pears and pomegranate sauce

PREP: 30 MINUTES/ TOTAL: 30 MINUTES/ 4 SERVINGS

- 5 large eggs
- 1 cup whole milk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1¼ teaspoons ground cardamom, divided
- 4 ¾-inch-thick slices egg bread
- 4 tablespoons butter, divided
- 2 firm but ripe unpeeled red Anjou or Bartlett pears, halved, cored, cut lengthwise into ⅓-inch-thick slices
- 1 cup pomegranate juice
- ¾ cup (packed) golden brown sugar

Whisk eggs, milk, vanilla, and ½ teaspoon cardamom to blend in 15x10x2-inch glass baking dish. Add bread slices; let stand until egg mixture is absorbed, turning bread slices occasionally with spatula, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, melt 1 tablespoon butter in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add pears; sauté until beginning to soften, about 3 minutes. Transfer pears to plate. Add 2 tablespoons butter to skillet; stir to melt. Add pomegranate juice, sugar, and remaining ¾ teaspoon cardamom; simmer until liquid is slightly thickened and syrupy, about 5 minutes. Remove sauce from heat.

Melt remaining 1 tablespoon butter on griddle or in another large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add bread slices and cook until golden brown, about 3 minutes per side. Cut French toast slices diagonally in half; divide among plates. Top with pear slices, spoon sauce over, and serve.

artichoke soup with pesto

PREP: 25 MINUTES/ TOTAL: 25 MINUTES/ 4 SERVINGS

- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 2 large garlic cloves, chopped, divided
- 1 large onion, chopped (about 2 cups)
- 2 8-ounce packages frozen artichoke hearts, thawed
- 2½ cups (or more) low-salt chicken broth or vegetable broth

Puree 3 tablespoons oil, cheese, basil, and ¼ teaspoon chopped garlic in mini processor until smooth. Season pesto with salt and pepper. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in heavy large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté until soft, about 6 minutes. Add all remaining garlic; stir 30 seconds. Add artichokes and 2½ cups broth. Bring to boil, reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until artichokes are soft, about 7 minutes. Working in batches, puree soup in blender until almost smooth. Strain into same saucepan, pressing on solids to release liquid. Thin with additional broth by ¼ cupfuls if desired. Season soup with salt and pepper. Divide among bowls; drizzle with pesto.

quinoa with black beans and cilantro

PREP: 25 MINUTES/ TOTAL: 40 MINUTES/ 4 TO 6 SERVINGS

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 cups chopped white onions
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 cup quinoa,* rinsed, drained
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1½ cups water
- 1 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed, drained
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro, divided
- Crumbled Cotija cheese or feta cheese (optional)

Heat oil in heavy medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onions and red pepper; sauté until beginning to soften, about 5 minutes. Stir in next 4 ingredients. Add water; bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until quinoa is almost tender, about 14 minutes. Add beans and ¼ cup cilantro; cook uncovered until heated through and liquid is fully absorbed, about 3 minutes. Transfer to bowl; sprinkle with ¼ cup cilantro and cheese, if desired.

*/ A grain with a delicate flavor and a texture similar to that of couscous; available at natural foods stores. /■

HAVE A QUESTION? E-MAIL US AT testkitchen@bonappetit.com.



at the market

mint

one ingredient at its seasonal peak and delicious things to do with it

TEXT BY AMY ALBERT
RECIPES BY CLARK FRASIER AND MARK GAIER

WHAT/ The leafy herb with a sweetly grassy flavor—and an uncanny ability to take over the garden. Peppermint is strong, with a menthol character. When dried, it's often used for mint tea. Spearmint is milder, tastes much better in cooking, and is usually what you'll find at produce markets.

WHY TRY/ For that refreshing flavor that gives a lift to mixed greens, grilled meats, herb sauces, fruit salads, yogurt-based dips, flavored syrups, and cakes. Also try varieties like chocolate mint and pineapple mint, often seen at farmers' markets; each has surprising overtones of its namesake.

recipes begin on p. 72

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN LEWIS/

HOW TO BUY AND STORE/ Look for bright leaves with uniform color and fresh aroma. Bunches of mint set in a glass of water look and smell great out on the counter, but trying to store mint in the fridge that way can be clumsy. Instead, rinse the leaves, pat dry, and wrap in paper towels. Sealed in plastic, the mint will keep for almost a week.

HEALTH MATTERS/ Moderate amounts of mint are an effective digestive aid and an effective breath freshener. Mint contains the antioxidants known as flavonoids.

lobster salad with fresh mint and lime

4 SERVINGS/ *Coconut milk adds surprising body and richness to the mint-lime mixture. If desired, reserve the lobster shells for stock.*

MINT-LIME MIXTURE

- **1 cup (loosely packed) fresh mint leaves (about 2 ounces)**
- **¾ cup canned unsweetened coconut milk***
- **½ cup fresh cilantro leaves**
- **¼ cup fresh lime juice**
- **¼ cup vegetable oil**
- **1½ teaspoons sugar**
- **1 serrano chile, seeded**

SALAD

- **2 2-pound cooked lobsters**
- **⅓ cup vegetable oil**
- **2 tablespoons Champagne vinegar or white wine vinegar**
- **10 cups mixed greens (such as arugula, baby spinach, and frisée)**
- **1 cup mixed fresh mint leaves, cilantro leaves, and small basil leaves**

MINT-LIME MIXTURE/ Puree all ingredients in processor. Cover and refrigerate. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 4 hours ahead. Keep chilled.

SALAD/ Crack lobster tails and claws and remove meat. Cut tail meat into ½-inch-thick medallions; leave claw meat whole.

Whisk oil and vinegar in small bowl. Season vinaigrette with salt and pepper.

Toss greens with vinaigrette in large bowl. Divide salad among 4 plates.

Toss lobster with ½ cup mint-lime mixture; divide among plates. Garnish with mint, cilantro, and basil leaves. Serve, passing remaining mint-lime mixture separately.

*/ Sold at many supermarkets and at Indian, Southeast Asian, and Latin markets.



LOBSTER SALAD WITH FRESH MINT AND LIME

grilled lamb skewers with spiced mint marinade

4 TO 6 SERVINGS/ *Fresh leaves give the classic lamb and mint sauce pairing a new twist. Great with jasmine rice and bok choy.*

- **1 cup (packed) fresh mint leaves, coarsely chopped**
- **¾ cup orange juice**
- **½ cup (packed) golden brown sugar**
- **¼ cup dry Sherry**
- **¼ cup apple cider vinegar**
- **3 garlic cloves, chopped**
- **1 tablespoon finely grated orange peel**
- **1 tablespoon chopped peeled fresh ginger**
- **2 teaspoons Szechuan peppercorns***
- **1 teaspoon Asian sesame oil**
- **1 teaspoon soy sauce**
- **1 teaspoon pink peppercorns, crushed**
- **1½ pounds 1-inch cubes trimmed leg of lamb (cut from 2½ pounds of untrimmed leg of lamb)**

Combine all ingredients except lamb in medium bowl for marinade. Thread lamb onto metal skewers. Place skewers in 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Pour marinade over. Cover with plastic wrap; chill overnight.

Transfer lamb skewers to baking sheet. Pour marinade into small saucepan.

Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat). Sprinkle lamb with salt and pepper. Grill to desired doneness, turning, about 8 minutes for medium-rare. Transfer to platter.

Boil marinade 5 minutes. Strain, then spoon over lamb and serve.

*/ Sometimes called wild pepper or *sansho* peppercorns; available at some specialty foods stores and at Asian markets. / ▸▸

FOR MORE RECIPES FEATURING FRESH MINT, GO TO bonappetit.com.

baked fish with thai lemon-mint sauce

6 SERVINGS/ *A delicious balance of tangy, sweet, and spicy. For more on banana-leaf wrapping, see "Prep School."*

1½ cups fresh lemon juice, divided
1½ cups chopped fresh mint leaves, divided
½ cup sugar
5 teaspoons fish sauce (such as nam pla or nuoc nam)*
3 teaspoons finely grated lemon peel, divided
1 teaspoon hot chili paste (such as sambal oelek)*
3 tablespoons corn oil
⅔ cup finely chopped lemongrass (bottom 3 inches of about 6 stalks)**
½ cup finely chopped shallots
6 banana leaves, each leaf cut into 10-inch-wide, 20-inch-long piece or six 10-inch-wide, 20-inch-long pieces of parchment paper**

6 6-ounce halibut fillets (1¼ to 1½ inches thick)
6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter, divided

Stir 1 cup lemon juice, ½ cup mint, sugar, fish sauce, 1 teaspoon lemon peel, and chili paste in small bowl until sugar dissolves. Set Thai lemon-mint sauce aside.

Mix remaining ½ cup lemon juice, 1 cup mint, and 2 teaspoons lemon peel in small bowl. Set mint topping aside.

Heat oil in heavy medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add lemongrass and shallots and sauté until shallots are slightly softened and golden, about 6 minutes. Cool.

Place 1 banana leaf or parchment sheet on work surface. Place 2 tablespoons cooled shallot-lemongrass mixture in center of banana leaf. Place 1 fish fillet on lemongrass mixture on banana leaf. Sprinkle fish with salt and pepper. Top with 1 tablespoon butter; spoon 2 tablespoons mint topping over. Fold 1 short side of banana leaf over fish. Fold long sides in. Roll up to completely enclose fish. Repeat with remaining banana leaves, shallot-lemongrass mixture, fish, butter, and mint topping. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 hours ahead. Chill.

Preheat oven to 450°F. Place fish packets on rimmed baking sheet and roast until fish is opaque in center, about 10 minutes. Unwrap fish and serve with Thai lemon-mint sauce.

*/ Available at Asian markets and some supermarkets.
**/ Available fresh or frozen at Southeast Asian and Latin markets.

coconut-mint cream cake

8 TO 10 SERVINGS/ *Mint gives delicious lift to the coconut flavors in this cake, which gets moistness from sweetened condensed milk and coconut cream.*

CAKE
2¾ cups cake flour
4 teaspoons baking powder
¾ teaspoon salt
1 cup whole milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon coconut extract (optional)
¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
1½ cups sugar, divided
4 large egg whites
1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
1 14-ounce can coconut cream

MINT WHIPPED CREAM
⅓ cup chopped fresh mint leaves
¼ cup sugar
3 tablespoons water
1½ cups heavy whipping cream, chilled
Sweetened flaked coconut

CAKE/ Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter two 8-inch-diameter cake pans with 2-inch-high sides; dust with flour. Place round of parchment paper in each pan.

Sift cake flour, baking powder, and salt into medium bowl. Mix milk, vanilla extract, and coconut extract in small bowl.

Beat butter and 1 cup sugar in large bowl until well blended. Beat in flour mixture alternately with milk mixture in several batches, beginning and ending with flour mixture and beating just to blend after each addition.

With clean dry beaters, beat egg whites in another large bowl until soft peaks form. Gradually add remaining ½ cup sugar and beat until stiff but not dry peaks form. Fold egg whites into batter in 3 additions.

Divide batter between prepared pans. Bake until tester inserted into center of cakes comes out clean, about 35 minutes.

Meanwhile, combine condensed milk and coconut cream in medium bowl.

Remove cakes from oven and let cool 5 minutes. Poke holes all over top of each cake layer with skewer. Pour coconut cream mixture by half cupfuls over cakes, allowing mixture to be absorbed before adding more. Cool completely in pans.

MINT WHIPPED CREAM/ Stir ⅓ cup mint, sugar, and 3 tablespoons water in small saucepan over low heat until sugar dissolves. Cook just until bubbles appear. Cover and remove from heat; let steep 30 minutes.

Strain syrup into large bowl, pressing on mint. Cool completely. Add 1½ cups chilled whipping cream to syrup and beat until firm peaks form. Turn cakes out of pans onto separate plates. Peel off parchment.

Spread 1 cup mint whipped cream on 1 cake layer. Top with second cake layer. Spread remaining mint whipped cream over top and sides of cake. Sprinkle with sweetened coconut. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover with cake dome and refrigerate.

INGREDIENT TIP/ *A thick mixture made from shredded coconut and water, coconut cream is often sold in cans or cartons. If unavailable, buy coconut milk and open the can without shaking. The thick white coconut cream will be at the top of the can, separated from the milk. Don't confuse coconut cream with cream of coconut, which is a sweetened mixture often used in drinks and desserts.*

6 MORE TO TRY/

INFUSE sugar syrup with mint leaves and drizzle over thinly sliced pineapple, papaya, and mango.

TOSS whole mint leaves into a salad of butter lettuce, mizuna, parsley, and chives; dress simply with lemon juice and olive oil.

SLICE mint leaves thinly, and scatter generously over pasta tossed with grilled vegetables and feta cheese.

STIR chopped mint and garlic into yogurt; serve as a dip or with Indian-style curries.

PUREE mint leaves with parsley, cilantro, olive oil, and garlic. Flavor with lemon juice or vinegar and drizzle over steak, chicken, lamb chops, or pork.

MUDDLE mint leaves with lime and a little sugar or agave nectar; add sparkling water for a refreshing soft drink. Splash in some light rum, and you'll have a Mojito. /■

Clark Frasier and Mark Gaier are the authors of The Arrows Cookbook: Cooking and Gardening from Maine's Most Beautiful Farmhouse Restaurant. *They own and run two restaurants in Ogunquit, Maine.*

FOR PRODUCT DETAILS, SEE SOURCEBOOK. FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

WINE & SPIRITS/ CIN CIN! ITALIAN WINE IS IN!

Sommeliers around the country are going beyond Pinot Grigio and Chianti and showing their stuff with unexpected Italian wines BY HEATHER JOHN ILLUSTRATION BY SERGE BLOCH

YOU CAN TELL A LOT ABOUT A WINE LIST THESE DAYS BY its by-the-glass offerings. Once the dumping ground for bottles restaurants needed to move in bulk, today's by-the-glass lists are more likely to represent the hottest wine trends and varietals. Last year, it was Austrian Grüner Veltliner; the year before, Spanish Rioja reds. But today, take a look at the savvier lists and you'll probably find the new darlings of the wine world: the Italians.

We're not talking about the ubiquitous Pinot Grigio or Chianti offerings—though you'll certainly find those affable varietals too—but rather, wine names that don't trip as easily off the tongue: fruity Italian whites such as Arneis, Falanghina, Soave, and Tocai Friulano; earthy Central and Southern reds like Brunello di Montalcino, Nero d'Avola, and Sagrantino.

According to David Lynch, co-author of *Vino Italiano* and former wine director at Babbo in New York, the sudden interest in Italian varietals is "not so revolutionary as evolutionary. The Italian wine evolution is running parallel to the sommelier revolution." Simply put, it's cool to be a sommelier. "And for the serious-minded, facial-haired wine geek of today," Lynch says, "there may be no more exciting region than Italy—a repository of ancient wine-grape migration with a diversity of grape varietals that's stunning."

As consumers and diners, we've become obsessed with artisanal ingredients, so it follows that we expect this from our wines as well. "With 'terroiristes' railing against the evils of industrialized wines and support for the artisanal producer," Lynch says, "there's a market for the customer to try something they've never heard of before."

Italy's lesser-known wines offer not only the thrill of discovery, but also something more basic: They're perfect with food. Often these wines are higher in acidity than their counterparts from France and California.

"Without food, the higher acidity can really freak people out," says David Rosoff, general manager of Osteria Mozza in Los Angeles. "It's a learning curve, and as people begin to associate wine more with food, they find Italian wine very user-friendly."

Rosoff adds that in New York, Italian wines are at the forefront of all wine lists, not just at Italian restaurants. For obvious reasons, the wine had less distance to travel to get to New York from Italy. Initially, Rosoff says, the idea of launching Osteria Mozza's entirely Italian wine list in /▸▸



Southern California, even in an Italian restaurant, was a little daunting. But it's been a huge success.

"We have close to 800 wines on the list, and the difference between each is exciting," he says. "The list really expresses itself from region to region, and even though it's just from one country, it's the most diverse wine list I've ever worked on in terms of flavors."

Shelley Lindgren, wine director at A16 in San Francisco, echoes Rosoff's initial concerns about an Italian-heavy list in California. "When we opened A16 over four years ago, it was a risk for us to offer lesser-known Italian varietals," Lindgren says. "Now customers come in and they've likely seen some of these varietals at other restaurants around the city. I think it has a lot to do with the whole renaissance that's been going on in Italian vineyards since the mid '90s. We're seeing more wines and better wines find their way to the West Coast."

In fact, over the past two decades, there has been a seismic shift in the quality of, as well as approach to, winemaking in Italy. The most notable category affected has been the lower-priced, value wines. Take the wines of Campania and Basilicata, for example. These Southern Italian regions have always had the *terroir* and southern latitude necessary to produce great reds, but until the last decade or so, vintners lacked access to the technology necessary to produce competitively priced quality wines on a larger scale.

Lynch attributes the sea change to a generational shift. "The younger generation is trying to do more with the vineyards instead of selling as many grapes as they can. Before the '90s, their father might have sold grapes to the local cooperative, whereas now, the son has decided to create a brand instead. Once some of the technology and skills spread to the Italian south, there was no stopping them."

And the proof is in the numbers. Today, Italy exports more wine to the United States than any other country, sending out twice as much wine as France. In 2006, the Italian wine industry crossed the billion-dollar mark in terms of wine exported to the U.S. And what we're seeing in the stores and on restaurant wine lists is better quality and better value than ever before.

For those who have not yet been bitten by the Italian bug, now's a great time to look for some of these lesser-known varietals. I've included ten bottles I've seen recently on wine lists across the country (and that's just scratching the surface of wines ready for discovery). The selection you'll find locally is likely to differ, so ask your sommelier or wine merchant for advice. For instance, if you like big, meaty reds, he or she might steer you toward a rich and dark Sagrantino with black pepper spice and earthiness. Or a hearty Barbera with bracing acidity (great with fattier foods) but gobs of bright fruit. More adventurous? Perhaps you'll enjoy a glass of Pinot Nero, Italy's name for Pinot Noir, with alpine herbaceousness and notes of clove. Perhaps you're in the mood for a straw-colored glass of Soave, a minerally white with almond characteristics. Or a fruit-bomb like Arneis that is as lovely enjoyed as an aperitif as it is with a seafood dinner.

Thanks to the great diversity of Italian wines, there's a bottle out there with your name on it. *Cin cin!* /■

HOT BOTTLES

BIANCO



Teruzzi & Puthod 2006 "Rondolino" Vernaccia di San Gimignano, TUSCANY/ $14
Clean lemon and green apple notes.



Bastianich 2006 Tocai Friulano, FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA/ $16
Ripe pear flavors balanced by bright minerality.



De Falco 2005 Falanghina, CAMPANIA/ $16
A rich floral white with apple and peach flavors.



Prà 2006 Soave Classico, VENETO/ $16
Bright citrus and tropical fruit with mineral notes.



Pertinace 2006 Roero Arneis, PIEDMONT/ $17
Floral aromas with peach flavors and almond notes.

ROSSO



Donnafugata 2006 "Sedàra" Nero d'Avola, SICILY/ $13
Inky dark with blueberry fruit and a spicy finish.



Montecarbello 2001 Brunello di Montalcino, TUSCANY/ $33
Full-bodied with blackberry flavors and floral aromas.



Corte Lenguin 2003 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico, VENETO/ $36
Rich, dried-cherry fruit and a hint of tobacco.



Scacciadiavoli 2003 Sagrantino di Montefalco, UMBRIA/ $43
A full-bodied red with velvety tannins and vanilla notes.



Niedrist 2005 Südtiroler Blauburgunder (Pinot Nero), TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE/ $45
Lovely acidity with herbal and raspberry notes.

CNP DIGITAL STUDIO

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

MY USUAL, PLEASE

In Seattle, a neighborhood restaurant that satisfies on all counts—plus the dish that keeps our columnist coming back

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MOLLY WIZENBERG

I'VE ALWAYS LIKED THE IDEA OF A NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANT. In a perfect world, we all would have one: a warm, dimly lit café around the corner; a bistro just a stumble down the block; a spot up the street where you could always get a table. We all would have a restaurant where we truly belonged—like the bar in *Cheers,* only without the kooky customers.

In this perfect world, the maître d' would greet you with a kiss on the cheek. The server would set down your usual drink before you'd even taken a seat. The menu would open like an old, familiar novel, the one you've read a half dozen times but never seem to tire of. You could eat and drink and carouse as though you were at your own kitchen table—but at the end of the evening, you could tumble into bed without washing a single dish. When I die, I've decided, I don't want to go to heaven. I want to go to my neighborhood restaurant.

Seattle, where I live, is lucky enough to have a lot of vibrant, distinct neighborhoods, each with its own cluster of commerce: a market, a barbershop, a bakery, a coffee shop (of course), and a restaurant or two. One of these neighborhoods, Montlake, is especially lucky. It is home to Café Lago, one of the best Italian restaurants in the city. I don't happen to live nearby—more like a 15-minute drive away—but if I did, I'd claim it as my neighborhood spot, no question. Heck, I already stop by often enough; I might as well claim it now. All that's left for me to do is pitch a tent outside the door.

Café Lago isn't new to the Seattle restaurant scene. In fact, the restaurant turns 18 this year, which by today's standards makes it something of a classic. Opened in 1990 by co-owners Jordi Viladas and Carla Leonardi, then husband and wife, Café Lago began as a small trattoria, seating only about 20-some-odd people and serving a concise menu of rustic Italian food. (Most of the recipes—especially fundamentals like the tomato sauce and the lasagna—came from Viladas's mother, whose family hails from Calabria; she moved from Connecticut to help the duo open the restaurant.)

Nearly two decades and two expansions later, Café Lago still sets the mark with its handmade pastas, pillow-light potato gnocchi, and thin, blistery-crusted pizzas. I'm hard-pressed to pass through Montlake without peering longingly through the front window, watching the fire in the pizza oven sway and flare. It's almost impossible to know what to order. The lasagna, made from gossamer sheets of fresh pasta, is good enough to make grown men sigh. The caponata is unusually fine: sweet-tart and appealingly chunky, speckled with slivers of green olive. Even the basic salad, the *insalata mista,* is impeccable, dressed in a made-to-order slurry of olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and balsamic reduction.

Now, in the interest of full disclosure, I suppose I should tell you that Carla Leonardi has become a good friend of mine, but that hardly /▸▸



Pomodori al Forno (recipe on page 90)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

influences my feelings about the place. Café Lago serves exactly the sort of food that I like to eat: simple and honest, prepared with infinite care. One dish in particular, the *pomodori al forno,* exemplifies this. It consists of little more than plum tomatoes that have been halved and seeded; seasoned with sugar, salt, and oregano; and roasted slowly in abundant olive oil. Served with slices of crisped baguette and a round of tangy aged goat cheese, it's compulsively delicious. I once overheard a man at a nearby table call it "the best appetizer in Seattle," and I wasn't the least bit surprised. *Pomodori al forno* may not be fancy, but it certainly tastes like it is.

> "/ SERVED WITH SLICES OF CRISPED BAGUETTE, IT'S COMPULSIVELY DELICIOUS. I ONCE HEARD A MAN CALL IT "THE BEST APPETIZER IN SEATTLE."

It's so tasty, in fact, that I begged Carla to teach me how to make it. (I may have deemed it my neighborhood joint, but I can't really go to Café Lago every night. I would miss cooking, and my wallet, too, would no doubt complain.) Lucky for all of us, she took pity on me. One afternoon last winter, Carla and sous-chef Willie Steinway took me behind the counter and gave me all the pointers for perfect *pomodori.*

The secret to Café Lago's roasted tomatoes—and, as a general rule, most anything worth eating—lies in the choice of ingredients. They use a fruity, high-quality olive oil, and their dried oregano comes with the stem still intact. They also start with the most beautiful canned tomatoes I've ever seen: rich and meaty, with flesh tinted a fierce shade of scarlet. Because the quality of canned tomatoes is consistently high year-round—and because demand for *pomodori al forno* doesn't exactly wane in the winter—Café Lago uses them without apology. Surprisingly enough, the brand they rely upon, Alta Cucina, is a domestic one, not an import from Italy.

"A good domestic brand almost always tastes better than the imported kind," Carla says. "I know it sounds weird, but it's true." (A native of Tuscany, she grew up with her uncle Giorgio's home-canned tomatoes, so she knows a good tomato when she tastes it.)

The kitchen goes through up to four giant cans of tomatoes every other day just to make *pomodori al forno.* First, the tomatoes are drained and sorted. Only those that are perfectly intact and unblemished will be roasted; the rest go into the sauce pot. Those that pass the test are halved and carefully seeded, doused with olive oil, seasoned, and slipped into a low oven. As they cook, they relax on the pan and their color deepens to a dark crimson. Then, as though that treatment weren't already deluxe enough, they're transferred with their oil into another container, layered with minced garlic and fresh parsley, and left to marinate until they taste impossibly rich and sweet.

I've tried the method with a variety of brands of canned tomatoes, as well as fresh ones. Alta Cucina, the brand Café Lago favors, is available through wholesale distributors and online, but I've had great luck with both Muir Glen and Hunt's. The best results of all came from ripe plum tomatoes, the kind that are cropping up at farmers' markets everywhere, right this minute. They take a bit longer to roast, but they pay off with a toothsome texture and mellow, winey flavor. From now until the last harvest of the year, I'll be roasting them at least once a week. My kitchen table may not come with a maître d' or a menu, but sometimes I don't half mind. /■

Molly Wizenberg is behind the award-winning blog Orangette. She is working on her forthcoming culinary memoir, A Homemade Life.

POMODORI AL FORNO

6 SERVINGS/

Adapted from Seattle's Café Lago's recipe, this simple and refreshing baked tomato dish is great on toasted baguette slices or tossed with pasta. If you're making this outside the height of tomato season, use best-quality canned tomatoes.

- **1 cup (or more) olive oil, divided**
- **2 pounds plum tomatoes, halved lengthwise, seeded**
- **1½ teaspoons dried oregano**
- **¾ teaspoon sugar**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **1 to 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **2 teaspoons minced fresh Italian parsley**
- **Aged goat cheese (such as Bûcheron)**
- **1 baguette, thinly sliced crosswise, toasted**

Preheat oven to 250°F. Pour ½ cup oil into 13x9x2-inch glass or ceramic baking dish. Arrange tomatoes in dish, cut side up. Drizzle with remaining ½ cup oil. Sprinkle with oregano, sugar, and salt. Bake 1 hour. Using tongs, turn tomatoes over. Bake 1 hour longer. Turn tomatoes over again. Bake until deep red and very tender, transferring tomatoes to plate when soft (time will vary, depending on ripeness of tomatoes), about 15 to 45 minutes longer.

Layer tomatoes in medium bowl, sprinkling garlic and parsley over each layer; reserve oil in baking dish. Drizzle tomatoes with reserved oil, adding more if necessary to cover. Let stand at room temperature 2 hours. **DO AHEAD** Cover; chill up to 5 days. Bring to room temperature before serving.

Serve with aged goat cheese and toasted baguette slices.

INGREDIENT TIP/ Alta Cucina canned plum tomatoes are available online from sciabica.com.

FOR MORE "COOKING LIFE" COLUMNS, GO TO *bonappetit.com/go/features.*

MY HOMETOWN

roy yamaguchi's honolulu/

Known for its beachy beauty, Hawaii is also a foodie paradise. Honolulu (on the island of Oahu) is home to chef Roy Yamaguchi's original Roy's restaurant. Since 1988, Yamaguchi has elevated the profile of Hawaiian fusion cuisine. And he has expanded his brand to 35 restaurants worldwide. So where does he go when he's back in town?

best quintessential hawaiian food/
FORT RUGER MARKET
My favorite local dish is *ahi poke* with Hawaiian salt, green and Maui onions, sesame oil, and *limu* [seaweed]. When I order it at Fort Ruger Market, I like to request *inamona* [roasted *kukui* nut] with it./ *3585 Alohea Avenue; 808-737-4531*

best nightlife/
PEARL
I don't frequent nightspots, but I really enjoy visiting Pearl at the Ala Moana Center. Many evenings they play the music I like—songs from the '70s and '80s—after 5:00 p.m./ *1450 Ala Moana Boulevard; 808-944-8000; pearlhawaii.com*

best breakfast/
JACK'S RESTAURANT
I always order the oxtail soup or tripe stew and rice for breakfast at Jack's Restaurant. The place is also known for its freshly baked biscuits./ *Aina Haina Shopping Center, 820 West Hind Drive, No. 19; 808-373-4034*

best unusual ingredients/
OAHU MARKET
When my restaurant throws a special party, I head for the Oahu Market in Chinatown. They carry exotic ingredients like pork tripe, omasum [beef stomach], and *uhu* [parrot fish]./ *Corner of King and Kekaulike streets; 808-841-6924*

best luau/
PARADISE COVE
A visit to Hawaii isn't complete without a luau, and Paradise Cove in nearby Kapolei offers one of the most well respected shows on the island. You can participate in such ceremonies as the *hukilau* [pulling of the fish nets] and the *'o'o ihe* [spear throwing] and see dinner cooked in an *imu* [underground oven]./ *92-1089 Aliinui Drive, Kapolei; 800-775-2683; paradisecovehawaii.com*

~RACHEL NG

CALENDAR

august 22–september 1/

OREGON STATE FAIR
Salem, Oregon
The highlight of this state fair is the food. Concession stands sell everything from barbecued chicken to funnel cakes. To wash it all down, there are some of Oregon's best wines. Tickets are $10 at the door./ *503-947-3247; oregonstatefair.org*

september 11–14/

GRAPEFEST
Grapevine, Texas
Billed as the largest wine festival in the Southwest, GrapeFest takes place in no less than Grapevine, Texas. Located in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, the city boasts a ten-acre vineyard and ten tasting rooms. The event includes a vintners' auction, a black-tie gala, live music, wine tastings, and more. For just $5, teams of two can get their feet wet in the daily GrapeStomp competitions. Tickets are $8./ *800-457-6338; grapevinetexasusa.com*

~DIANE CHANG

MARKET

breakfast sampler/

One of the best reasons to shop at a farmers' market is the opportunity to taste the products—a sliver of crisp apple, a schmear of fresh goat cheese—before you buy them. But at the All-Local Farmers' Market in downtown Columbia, South Carolina, organizers offer more than just a snack—they literally make a meal of it. Twice a month, marketgoers can pick up seasonal produce, pastured pork, Angus beef, freshly milled stone-ground grits, and the best $4 breakfast around.

On the menu: scrambled eggs, breakfast sausage links, and organic heirloom grits from Columbia-area vendors Wil-Moore Farms, Caw Caw Creek Pastured Pork, and Anson Mills, respectively. "When we first started [the market], the breakfast was what brought people in," says Kristian Niemi, who hosts the breakfast and market at his restaurant and wine bar, Gervais & Vine. Judging by the breakfast-crowd turnout on the market's second anniversary, it still is.

On a crisp morning, products ranging from hot sauce and local honey to all manner of leafy greens were arrayed on the front patio. Inside, shoppers lingered over free coffee at the bar, and at least one large group polished off a couple of sparkling-wine bottles with breakfast, which was sold out by 10:00 a.m.

"It's a great way for people to try the products," says organizer Emile DeFelice of Caw Caw Creek farm. He and Niemi teamed up to start the all-local market after being frustrated for years by the area's lack of a real growers' market. (Columbia has a larger, state-run farmers' market that features imported produce sold alongside some locally grown crops.)

They may not have envisioned the buzzy conviviality that a hearty, practically homemade country breakfast adds, but that, too, seems to be supporting the sales strategy. Overheard across the bar on a recent Saturday: "That's really good sausage, isn't it?"/ *620-A Gervais Street (the second Saturday of the month) and 2631 Devine Street (the fourth Saturday of the month); 803-917-0794*

–MONICA PARCELL

CALENDAR

september 13–14/

10TH ANNUAL CHILIFEST

Wells, Maine

Head to this small town on Maine's southern coast for all the chili and salsa you can handle. Just $5 gets you a tasting kit and a ballot to vote for the best. Hungry for more? Food booths will be selling standard fair fare, and if you still haven't had enough salsa and chili, you can pick up your favorites to bring home. Admission is free./ *207-646-2451; wellschamber.org*

september 15-21/

VIKING CLASSIC

Madison, Mississippi

As Chad Campbell defends his PGA title at the Annandale Golf Club, foodies can visit the Viking Culinary Tent, where eating—not golfing—is the main event. *Bon Appétit*'s executive chef Cat Cora will be on hand to give cooking demonstrations. Tickets start at $20./ *866-898-4653; vikingclassic.com*

september 21–23/

SHENANDOAH SEASONINGS

Shenandoah National Park, Virginia

Join Terry Sheehan, executive chef at Skyland Resort, for a sustainable-cooking workshop. The trip includes a chef's reception, various cooking demonstrations of Sheehan's unique take on traditional southern cuisine, and a chef's dinner featuring dishes like turkey and truffle pot pie and venison sauerbraten, with ingredients sourced from local farms and wineries. The cost, which includes hotel accommodations, is $499 per couple./ *800-778-2872; visitshenandoah.com*

–CAMILLE HAHN AND KAT ODELL

THE FOOD WRITER'S DIET

A cookbook author and a size 2? MELISSA CLARK *shares her secrets.* PHOTOGRAPHY BY DARREN BRAUN



JUST A TYPICAL DAY AT THE OFFICE. ON THE COUNTER, BOWLS of chocolate pudding in many variations are waiting for tasting: milk chocolate-banana pudding, chocolate *pots de crème,* bittersweet chocolate pudding with toffee, and a chocolate flan sparked with chiles and anise, all for a pudding article in progress. In a mere few hours, I'll be having dinner at a hot new Manhattan restaurant, where the chef will send out some appetizers, a mid course, and an entrée to sample—in addition to what we will have already ordered.

Repeat this five times over, substituting other delicacies for pudding, and you have my workweek in a nutshell.

As a food writer and recipe developer, my job is to eat a steady diet of everything from fancy restaurant cuisine to humble home cooking with discriminating gusto. I couldn't—nor wouldn't—want to say no to the parade of foie gras terrines, braised lamb shanks, or desserts with names like Molten Chocolate Nirvana. But as a health- and, okay, appearance-conscious person, my secondary goal after eating well is fitting into my favorite skinny jeans.

So far, I can do both. And I'm not alone in the food-writing world. I've noticed that the majority of my colleagues who eat for a living are on the slimmer side of the American demographic. Every food writer who hasn't lucked out in the metabolic gene pool (myself included) has their own way of keeping fit. But it's my theory that by being discerning, conscious eaters, food writers are able to take great pleasure in their meals while eating less overall, even when dining out night after night.

THIS WAS ONE OF THE FIRST LESSONS I learned about weight loss, when I was a fleshy college student trying to figure out how to lose those extra 25 pounds in time for bikini season. Even back then I was obsessed with food, spending my downtime running around Manhattan, searching out the best bacon burger, creamy gelato, or mouth-searing curry.

I was unhappy with the extra poundage, but giddy with the city's culinary delights. And though I tried countless times to follow the fad diet du jour of grapefruits or cabbage soup, nothing stuck except the weight. Summer came and I hid my body beneath a T-shirt and sarong. But I also gradually started changing my eating, tempering the exuberant quantities by focusing a little more on quality.

I remember the precise moment of my weight-loss epiphany. I was staring, in turn, at my expanding belly and the plate of half-eaten chorizo nachos sitting in front of me. I thought, *Hmm, maybe I don't actually need to finish all this*/▸▸

food. I've reveled in the flavors—now I'll stop. I pushed the plate out of reach. And I certainly didn't need to eat another bite of that tasteless, bloated burrito I was sharing with my friend.

It was then that it dawned on me to only eat food that I like, and to not eat things that I don't. It sounds simple, but at the time, when I tended to polish off everything in front of me just because it was there, it was revolutionary.

I started applying this nascent philosophy to all my meals, eating the things I wanted, but less of them, and not eating the things I didn't want or like. Then I began supplementing each meal with fruit or vegetables to fill me up. If I ordered an eggplant-and-pepperoni pizza, I also ordered a side salad. I ate all the salad, and only one or two slices of pizza, bringing the rest home for another meal, or sharing it with friends.

The more I thought about what I was eating, the better decisions I made. But it wasn't about denying myself treats. If I really wanted a cookie, I ate it—but just one. Allowing myself the cookie, and really savoring it in the moment, meant I didn't need to binge on the rest of the box two hours later.

Frank Bruni, the fit restaurant critic for *The New York Times,* employs a similar tactic. "There are many times I would love to just go buy and eat a pint of ice cream," he told me, "but I don't do it. But I also won't deprive myself of a sesame bagel with Swiss cheese and tomato if that's what I want for breakfast. A person can eat 700 calories of stuff that they really didn't want (but think would be good for them) and then be haunted for the next two hours, feeling unsatisfied. So they backslide by eating another 400 calories. I'd rather just eat the 600 calories that I really wanted in the first place."

BY USING THIS EAT-WHAT-YOU-LIKE-DON'T-EAT-WHAT-you-don't-like strategy, together with ordering (and eating) a salad or a vegetable side dish every time I went out, plus exercising three to four times a week, the weight came off. It's stayed off since, and although I wouldn't be caught dead in the clothes I used to flaunt in college, it's not because they don't fit.

This is not to say it's been a breeze staying slim in the face of my nightly onslaught of ricotta gnocchi with duck *ragù.*

One trick that works for me is to never skip lunch. If I arrive at dinner famished, I'll empty the bread basket and eat all the butter in one fell swoop—whether or not the bread is artisanally baked and the butter seasoned with fleur de sel.

According to registered dietitian Dawn Jackson Blatner, eating three meals a day on a regular schedule, coupled with snacking on something healthful like an apple before dinner, may help you eat about 200 calories less each meal. "Never arrive at a restaurant so hungry you can't think straight," she said. "Hungry people make bad ordering decisions."

Ordering isn't a problem for me: I usually go for the tasting menu. But that means that even if I love everything, I need to pace myself by just eating a few bites, not lapping up every last swoosh of beurre blanc. There are exceptions to this rule: All caviar, sea urchin, and fried pork skin gets wholly devoured. But with everything else, after I've savored a little bit, I force myself to put down my fork.

Blatner calls this habit of mine "naturally slim behavior." I don't tell her it's more cultivated than natural. But the point is that it works. "I tell people to savor their food rather than stuff themselves. When you eat a little of the food you really love without feeling deprived, and are fully present in the experience, you end up being a happier person," she said, adding that you'll also probably end up eating less.

Andrea Strong, a blogger for thestrongbuzz.com who eats out almost every night, credits portion control, combined with conscious eating, as the key to keeping her figure. "I try to never finish everything in front of me," she confessed. "I usually try to leave half, but at least I'll leave something. Of course, then my fiancé often vacuums it up."

And then there's exercise, something most fit food writers do to one degree or another. Bruni exercises upwards of six hours per week. Strong spends five days at the gym working out more intensely than just "passing the time on the elliptical machine, reading *US* magazine."

But the most important way that food writers control their eating is, ironically, by not being too controlling.

As Strong told me, "The great thing about being a food writer is that you have a permanent excuse to eat. So you can't get too hung up on it. I've learned that I can eat whatever I want and enjoy it as long as I'm smart about it. I really think the happier and less neurotic you are about what you're eating, the less likely you'll become as big as a house." /■

Melissa Clark writes the New York Times *column "A Good Appetite." She's also co-author of the diet book* The Skinny.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Worried about your weight? The next time you sit down to eat at a restaurant, remember these six simple tips.

ORDER TWO APPETIZERS instead of an appetizer and an entrée. Or split an entrée with a friend.

STOP EATING WHEN you're only two thirds full. It takes time for your brain to know that you're actually satisfied.

SHARE DESSERT. Dawn Jackson Blatner, a dietitian, has a three-fork rule: Make sure there are at least three forks for every one dessert.

ORDER A SALAD or a vegetable side dish with your meal, and eat it.

DON'T EAT ANYTHING on the plate that you don't like. Ever.

IF YOU REALLY WANT to order the ten-course tasting menu with wine pairings, go for it. But try to eat sensibly and exercise a little more the next day.

FOR MORE "HEALTH WISE" COLUMNS, GO TO bonappetit.com/go/features.



HAND-LETTERING BY BEN WILSON. PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE VILLAGE IDIOT IN LOS ANGELES; FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

bon appétit
SEPTEMBER 2008



The Restaurant Issue

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MISHA GRAVENOR



Molto Americano

THE NEW BREED OF ITALIAN RESTAURANTS BRINGS AMERICAN FLAIR TO OUR FAVORITE OLD-WORLD DISHES. THE RESULT? *MOLTO BENE.*

TEXT BY **Camille Hahn**
RESEARCH BY **Andrew Knowlton**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Craig Cutler**



ANTIPASTI

WILD MUSHROOM CROSTINI/
FRESH ARTICHOKE AND WHITE BEAN CROSTINI
Cinghiale/
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LEEKS VINAIGRETTE WITH BURRATA CHEESE AND MUSTARD BREADCRUMBS
Osteria Mozza/
Los Angeles
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SALUMI WITH GRAPE MOSTARDA AND WHOLE WHEAT GNOCCHI FRITTI
Osteria Marco/
Denver
recipe on page 104

Welcome to the Italian-American renaissance.

At modern Italian restaurants across the country—from a Mario Batali outpost in L.A. to a family-owned spot in Dallas—chefs are moving beyond rustic, regional Italian food. Instead, they're transforming the cuisine into something utterly American, with cross-cultural nods, frequent improvisation, and irreverent rule-breaking. And the results? Roasted pork chops seasoned simply with fennel pollen and served, French-style, with *frisée aux lardons*. Ravioli stuffed with sweet cauliflower and mascarpone in a *guanciale*-butter sauce. Beautiful roasted beets in a rich mustard cream. It's the most exciting, appealing food to eat right now, whether you're in New York or St. Louis. To celebrate, we've collected recipes from our 12 favorite places across the country for a fantasy restaurant menu, from antipasti to *dolci*. *Buon appetito*.

Antipasti

SALUMI WITH GRAPE MOSTARDA AND WHOLE WHEAT GNOCCHI FRITTI

6 SERVINGS/

If there isn't a *salumi* plate, it can't be a modern Italian restaurant. Chef Frank Bonanno at the Osteria Marco in Denver takes the trend one step further, adding house-made relish and fluffy fried dough.

MOSTARDA

- 6 cups stemmed seedless red grapes (about 2 pounds)
- 1 cup chopped red onion
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup Champagne vinegar
- 2 tablespoons mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary
- Peel of 1 orange, removed in strips with vegetable peeler
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

GNOCCHI

- 1½ tablespoons warm (105°F to 115°F) whole milk
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon active dry yeast
- ¾ cup (or more) whole wheat flour
- ½ teaspoon (scant) salt
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 7 tablespoons lukewarm water
- 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil plus more for coating bowl
- Canola oil (for deep-frying)
- 1 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese

SALUMI

Assorted thinly sliced Italian cured meats (such as salami, mortadella, prosciutto, speck, and coppa)

MOSTARDA/ Bring all ingredients except mustard to simmer in heavy large pot over medium heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Simmer until liquids thicken and grapes are soft but most are still intact, stirring often, about 30 minutes. Mix in mustard. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 week ahead. Cool, cover, and chill.

GNOCCHI/ Stir warm milk and sugar in small bowl; mix in yeast. Let stand until mixture looks spongy, about 6 minutes.

Combine ¾ cup flour, salt, and cayenne in large bowl. Add 7 tablespoons lukewarm water, 1 teaspoon olive oil, and yeast mixture; stir until soft slightly sticky dough forms. Coat another large bowl with olive oil. Add dough and turn to coat. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and kitchen towel. Let dough rise in warm draft-free area until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.

Knead dough on work surface until smooth, sprinkling lightly with more flour if very sticky. Divide dough in half. Shape each half into 2-inch-wide ⅓-inch-thick rectangle. Cover with plastic wrap.

Set pasta machine to widest setting. Run 1 rectangle through machine 6 times. Cut dough in half crosswise; turn machine to next-narrower setting. Continue to run dough through machine, adjusting to next-narrower setting after each 6 passes, until each strip is about 4 inches wide, 12 inches long, and 1/16 inch thick. Repeat with second dough rectangle. Cut each dough strip crosswise into 1-inch-wide strips.

Pour canola oil into large saucepan to depth of 1 inch. Attach deep-fry thermometer to pan; heat oil over medium heat to 350°F. Fry dough in batches until golden and crisp, about 2 minutes per batch. Transfer to paper-towel-lined baking sheet. Sprinkle hot gnocchi with cheese. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 6 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature. Rewarm in 350°F oven about 5 minutes.

SALUMI/ Arrange salumi on platter. Serve with mostarda and gnocchi.

DANDELION SALAD WITH ROASTED PEPPERS AND GOAT CHEESE*

6 SERVINGS/

The antipasto salad goes upscale at the 8,000-square-foot A Mano Trattoria in Chicago: Dandelion greens replace iceberg lettuce, freshly charred peppers stand in for jarred ones, and a rare artisanal cheese subs for the mass-produced provolone.

- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons minced shallots
- ⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large red bell pepper
- 2 bunches dandelion greens, stems trimmed, leaves torn
- 5 ounces Capra honey goat cheese or 5 ounces plain soft fresh goat cheese mixed with 2 teaspoons honey, crumbled

Combine lemon juice and shallots in small bowl. Gradually whisk in oil. Season dressing to taste with salt and pepper.

Char bell pepper directly over gas flame or in broiler until blackened on all sides. Enclose in paper bag 10 minutes. Peel, seed, and cut pepper into thin strips.

*COVER RECIPE



PRIMI

TAGLIERINI WITH BAY SCALLOPS AND MEYER LEMON
Nonna/
Dallas
recipe on page 109

CAULIFLOWER RAVIOLI WITH GUANCIALE
Acero/
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SEMOLINA GNOCCHI WITH OXTAIL RAGÙ
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CONTORNI

BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH PANCETTA/ ROASTED BEETS IN MUSTARD CREAM
Alba Osteria & Enoteca/
Portland, Oregon
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SECONDI

LAMB CACCIATORE
SPQR/
San Francisco
recipe on page 110

HERB-ROASTED WHOLE BRANZINO WITH POTATOES, TOMATOES, AND OLIVES
Rocca Kitchen & Bar/
Boston
recipe on page 110

ROASTED PORK CHOPS WITH FRISÉE, LARDONS, AND FRIED EGGS
Mia Dona/
New York
recipe on page 110



Toss greens and roasted peppers in large bowl with enough dressing to coat. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, and goat cheese. **INGREDIENT TIP/** Capra goat cheese is a rich, creamy Belgian cheese that's aged only a few weeks and is sometimes flavored with honey. Order it online at igourmet.com.

LEEKS VINAIGRETTE WITH BURRATA CHEESE AND MUSTARD BREADCRUMBS

8 SERVINGS/

Most *burrata*—cream-filled fresh mozzarella—is made in just two places: Puglia and Southern California. But this addictive cheese is catching on. Chef Nancy Silverton combines it with leeks and breadcrumbs at her (and Mario Batali's) Osteria Mozza in Los Angeles. Look for *burrata* at Italian delis and cheese stores.

BREADCRUMBS

- 2 tablespoons mustard seeds
- ¼ cup whole grain Dijon mustard
- ¼ cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup canola oil
- ½ 16-ounce loaf country white bread, crusts trimmed, bread diced

VINAIGRETTE

- ⅓ cup fresh lemon juice
- ⅓ cup whole grain Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon peel
- ⅔ cup olive oil

LEEKS

- 8 medium leeks, each cut to 6-inch length, root ends trimmed
- 1½ cups low-salt chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 large fresh thyme sprigs
- 1 large lemon, cut into very thin rounds
- Chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 16 ounces burrata cheese or fresh water-packed mozzarella cheese, sliced

BREADCRUMBS/ Preheat oven to 250°F. Toast mustard seeds in skillet over medium heat until beginning to darken and pop, about 5 minutes; transfer to bowl and cool. Grind seeds to powder in spice mill.

Whisk whole grain mustard, wine, oil, and ground mustard seeds in medium bowl. Season mustard coating with salt and pepper. Toss bread pieces and coating in large bowl to coat evenly. Spread bread out on rimmed baking sheet.

Bake bread pieces until dried and slightly colored, stirring occasionally, about 1 hour 15 minutes. Cool completely. Using potato masher, coarsely crush bread on sheet. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 3 days ahead. Cover and chill. Rewarm in 350°F oven 4 to 5 minutes before using.

VINAIGRETTE/ Place first 3 ingredients in medium bowl. Gradually whisk in oil. Season vinaigrette to taste with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 3 days ahead. Cover; chill. Bring to room temperature and rewhisk before using.

LEEKS/ Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 450°F. Cut leeks in half lengthwise. Rinse under cold water to remove any grit between layers; drain on paper towels. Arrange leeks, cut side down, in single layer in 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Pour broth over; drizzle with oil. Top with thyme sprigs and lemon slices. Cover dish tightly with plastic wrap, then foil.

Bake leeks 35 minutes. Uncover; discard lemon. Bake leeks uncovered until very tender and browned, and liquid is almost evaporated, about 50 minutes. Cool 15 minutes. Serve or let stand up to 2 hours.

Arrange 2 leeks on each plate; sprinkle with vinaigrette, breadcrumbs, and parsley. Arrange cheese alongside.

WILD MUSHROOM CROSTINI

MAKES 8/

The traditional crostini topping is a soft pâté, but the wild mushrooms with truffle oil served by chef Julian Marucci at Baltimore's Cinghiale are just as indulgent.

MUSHROOM TOPPING

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 12 ounces assorted wild mushrooms (such as stemmed shiitake, oyster, black trumpet, and crimini), sliced
- 1½ teaspoons chopped fresh thyme

THYME VINAIGRETTE

- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 small shallot, chopped
- ½ cup olive oil plus more for brushing
- 8 ⅓- to ½-inch-thick slices pain rustique or other flat country bread
- Truffle oil

MUSHROOM TOPPING/ Melt butter in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and thyme. Sauté until browned, about 8 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover; chill. Rewarm before using.

THYME VINAIGRETTE/ Blend first 4 ingredients in blender 10 seconds. With machine running, gradually add ½ cup olive oil; blend until almost smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Arrange bread on rimmed baking sheet. Brush with oil. Bake until beginning to crisp, about 8 minutes.

Mound ¼ cup mushrooms on each bread slice. Drizzle each with thyme vinaigrette, then sparingly with truffle oil.

FRESH ARTICHOKE AND WHITE BEAN CROSTINI

MAKES 16/

A Sicilian combination—artichokes and beans—becomes another creative variation on crostini at Cinghiale.

- 4 artichokes, halved lengthwise, tops and stems trimmed, center leaves removed, chokes scraped out
- 6 cups (or more) low-salt chicken broth
- 1 cup dry white wine
- ½ cup chopped carrot
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ½ cup chopped celery
- 2 large fresh thyme sprigs
- 1 cup drained rinsed canned cannellini (white kidney beans)
- ½ cup grated Pecorino Romano cheese
- ¼ cup (packed) finely chopped fresh basil plus whole leaves for garnish
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil plus more for brushing
- 8 ⅓- to ½-inch-thick slices pain rustique or other flat country bread
- Lemon wedges

Bring artichokes, 6 cups broth, and next 5 ingredients to boil in large saucepan, adding more broth if necessary to cover. Reduce heat; cover and simmer until artichoke hearts are very tender, about 50 minutes. Chill artichokes in broth mixture, uncovered, until cold, at least 2 hours and up to 1 day.

Remove artichokes from broth; drain. Pull off leaves. Cut hearts into ⅓-inch cubes; place in large bowl. Mix beans, cheese, ¼ cup chopped basil, and 2 tablespoons oil into hearts. Season with salt and pepper.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Arrange bread on rimmed baking sheet. Brush with oil. Bake until beginning to crisp, about 8 minutes.

Spoon artichoke topping onto bread. Squeeze lemon juice over; top with basil leaf.

Primi

CAULIFLOWER RAVIOLI WITH GUANCIALE

6 APPETIZER SERVINGS/

Guanciale (cured pork jowl and cheek) is traditionally used in pasta carbonara and *all'amatriciana*. These days, it's showing

up on pizzas, next to slow-cooked beans, and in the sauce for this indulgent ravioli from Acero in St. Louis. At the brick-walled establishment, they push the ravioli's flavor even further by roasting the cauliflower. The pasta dough needs to be made a day ahead, or use purchased wonton wrappers as an easy alternative.

PASTA

- 1½ cups semolina flour (pasta flour)*
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 3 large eggs
- 3 large egg yolks
- All purpose flour

FILLING

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 3 cups 1-inch cauliflower florets
- ½ cup water
- 6 tablespoons ricotta cheese
- 6 tablespoons finely grated Parmesan cheese plus more for serving
- ⅓ cup mascarpone cheese**

SAUCE

- 8 ounces thinly sliced guanciale or pancetta (Italian bacon), cut crosswise into thin strips
- 3 cups low-salt chicken broth
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter

PASTA/ Mix semolina flour and salt in large bowl. Whisk eggs and yolks in small bowl. Gradually stir egg mixture into flour. Turn dough out onto lightly floured surface. Knead until smooth and elastic (dough will be sticky). Wrap in plastic wrap; chill 1 day.

FILLING/ Melt butter with oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add cauliflower; sprinkle with salt and pepper and sauté until golden, about 7 minutes. Add ½ cup water. Cover and simmer until cauliflower is tender, about 5 minutes. Uncover and cook until dry, about 3 minutes. Cool completely.

Blend ricotta, 6 tablespoons Parmesan, and mascarpone in processor until smooth. Add cauliflower and blend until filling is smooth. Season with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Transfer to bowl, cover, and chill.

SAUCE/ Sauté guanciale in large deep skillet over medium-high heat until golden and crisp. Add broth and butter. Boil until sauce thickens and is reduced to 1½ cups, about 12 minutes. Chill up to 4 hours.

Line large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper; dust with all purpose flour. Divide dough into 3 pieces; cover with plastic wrap to prevent drying. Set pasta machine to widest setting. Flatten 1 dough piece into rectangle; run though machine. Fold in half, end to end, and run through machine again. Continue, adjusting to next-narrower setting after every 4 or 5 passes and dusting with flour as needed to keep from sticking, until sheet is about 24 inches long and about 1/16 inch thick. Cut sheet in half crosswise.

Drop filling onto 1 dough strip by heaping teaspoonfuls, spacing 1½ inches apart. Brush dough with water around each mound. Top with second dough strip; press around each mound to seal. Cut each ravioli into 2-inch square. Arrange on prepared sheet; cover with kitchen towel. Repeat with remaining dough and filling. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 3 hours ahead; chill.

Cook ravioli in large pot of boiling salted water until just tender, stirring occasionally. Drain well. Rewarm sauce. Add ravioli and toss over medium-high heat until sauce coats ravioli, about 2 minutes. Transfer to shallow bowl. Serve, passing grated Parmesan.

*/ Available at some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Italian markets.

**/ An Italian cream cheese; sold at many supermarkets and at Italian markets.

INGREDIENT TIP/ Guanciale (salt-cured pork jowl and cheek) is available at Italian markets and online from salumeriabiellese.com.

SEMOLINA GNOCCHI WITH OXTAIL RAGÙ

6 TO 8 SERVINGS/

Until quite recently, Italian restaurants in the U.S. served just one version of gnocchi: the potato kind. But gnocchi made from semolina (such as this one from the James Beard Award-nominated, industrial-chic Osteria in Philadelphia) is equally authentic.

RAGÙ

- 5 pounds 2- to 3-inch pieces oxtails
- All purpose flour
- ½ cup olive oil
- 5 large celery stalks, coarsely chopped
- 2 large carrots, peeled, chopped
- 1 large onion, very coarsely chopped
- 2 cups dry red wine
- 1¼ cups canned crushed tomatoes with added puree
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 6 fresh Italian parsley sprigs
- 2 large fresh rosemary sprigs
- 3 Turkish bay leaves
- 2 cups beef broth
- 1 cup low-salt chicken broth

GNOCCHI

- 3 cups whole milk
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, diced
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 1 cup semolina flour (pasta flour)*
- 4 large egg yolks
- 1½ cups grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- Chopped fresh Italian parsley

RAGÙ/ Preheat oven to 325°F. Sprinkle oxtails with salt and pepper, then flour. Heat oil in heavy wide ovenproof pot over high heat. Add oxtails; cook until brown on all sides, about 15 minutes. Transfer to bowl. Add celery, carrots, and onion to pot. Reduce heat to medium-high and sauté until vegetables brown, about 15 minutes. Add wine and tomatoes. Boil until thickened to chunky sauce, about 5 minutes. Sprinkle in garlic. Tie parsley, rosemary, and bay leaves with kitchen string and add to pot. Return oxtails to pot in single layer. Add all broth; bring to boil. Cover pot; place in oven.

Braise oxtails until very tender, about 2 hours. Transfer oxtails to rimmed baking sheet. Using potato masher, crush juices and vegetables in pot to coarse sauce. Pull meat off oxtails and add to sauce. Season ragù with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 days ahead. Cool, cover, and chill. Rewarm before continuing.

GNOCCHI/ Butter 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Bring milk, butter, and salt to simmer in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Gradually whisk in semolina. Stir until semolina is very thick and bubbling, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat; mix in yolks, 1 at a time, then 1 cup Parmesan. Place pot over low heat and stir 2 minutes. Spread semolina in prepared dish. Cover and chill until firm, at least 2 hours and up to 2 days.

Preheat oven to 475°F. Butter 15x10x2-inch glass baking dish. Using 1¾-inch round cutter, cut out as many semolina gnocchi as possible; arrange in prepared dish. Top with warm ragù; sprinkle with remaining ½ cup Parmesan. Bake until heated through, 10 to 15 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley.

*/ Available at some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Italian markets.

TAGLIERINI WITH BAY SCALLOPS AND MEYER LEMON

4 SERVINGS/

At Nonna in Dallas, two appealing American ingredients—Meyer lemons and bay scallops—give new life to a classic pasta. Chef Julian Barsotti, who named the place after his *nonna* (grandmother), makes the taglierini by hand.

- 7 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 cup fresh breadcrumbs (from crustless French bread ground in processor)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

- ¾ teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
- 12 ounces taglierini or linguine
- 12 ounces bay scallops, patted dry
- ¾ cup minced shallots (about 3 large)
- ¼ cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup fresh Meyer lemon juice or regular lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter
- ¼ cup chopped fresh chervil or Italian parsley

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add breadcrumbs and stir until golden, about 5 minutes. Stir in red pepper. Transfer to bowl; reserve skillet.

Cook pasta in large pot of boiling salted water until just tender but still firm to bite, stirring occasionally. Drain, reserving 1 cup pasta cooking liquid. Return pasta to pot.

Heat 3 tablespoons oil in reserved skillet over high heat. Add scallops; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Sauté until browned, about 1 minute. Transfer scallops to pot with pasta. Add shallots to skillet; sauté 3 minutes. Add wine and lemon juice; boil, scraping up browned bits. Add lemon sauce, 3 tablespoons oil, and butter to pasta. Toss over medium heat until sauce coats pasta, adding reserved cooking liquid by ¼ cupfuls to moisten if needed. Mix in half of breadcrumb mixture.

Transfer pasta to bowl. Sprinkle with remaining crumb mixture, then chervil.

Secondi

HERB-ROASTED WHOLE BRANZINO WITH POTATOES, TOMATOES, AND OLIVES

4 SERVINGS/

No one does a whole fish quite so well as the new Italian restaurants. At Rocca Kitchen & Bar in Boston, which has a Ligurian surf-and-turf theme, chef Tom Fosnot uses *branzino,* a fish beloved in Italy since Roman times.

- Nonstick vegetable oil spray
- 1¼ pounds russet potatoes, peeled, cut crosswise into ¼-inch-thick rounds
- 2½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme
- 2 13- to 14-ounce branzino (loup de mer) or striped bass, scaled, gutted
- 6 fresh marjoram sprigs
- 4 thin lemon slices, halved
- ¼ cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup water
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 12 whole Kalamata olives
- 12 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted
- Fleur de sel

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray rimmed baking sheet with nonstick spray. Toss potatoes and 1 tablespoon oil on sheet; sprinkle with thyme, salt, and pepper. Bake until almost tender, about 12 minutes; set aside.

Maintain oven temperature. Sprinkle fish inside and out with salt and pepper. Stuff each with marjoram sprigs and lemon slices. Arrange fish in 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Pour in wine, ¼ cup water, and lemon juice. Drizzle with 1½ tablespoons oil.

Roast fish 15 minutes. Scatter olives and tomatoes around. Tuck in reserved potatoes and sprinkle with nuts. Continue to roast until fish is just opaque in center, about 20 minutes longer. Sprinkle with fleur de sel.

LAMB CACCIATORE

8 SERVINGS/

SPQR in San Francisco redefines cacciatore, creating a "hunter's" dish in the purest sense: Lamb is seasoned simply with what's on hand and served with arugula and lemon wedges. This dish is typical of SPQR: Following the Roman style, chef Nate Appleman goes easy on the spices to let the high-quality ingredients speak for themselves.

- 3 pounds well-trimmed boneless leg of lamb, cut into 1- to 1½-inch chunks
- ¼ cup dry white wine
- 2 large garlic cloves
- 6 tablespoons (or more) extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint
- 4 anchovy fillets, finely chopped
- 1 5- to 6-ounce container baby arugula
- Nonstick vegetable oil spray (optional)
- 2 lemons, cut into wedges

Place lamb in 15x10x2-inch glass dish. Drizzle with wine and sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper.

Press garlic into small bowl. Mix in 4 tablespoons oil, all herbs, and anchovies. Stir mixture into lamb. Cover; chill at least 2 hours and up to 1 day.

Toss arugula and 2 tablespoons oil in large bowl. Arrange on large platter as bed for lamb; sprinkle with salt and pepper.

If grilling lamb, spray grill rack with nonstick spray and prepare barbecue (medium-high heat). Thread lamb onto metal skewers; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill to desired doneness, turning occasionally, about 10 minutes for medium-rare. Slide lamb onto arugula; serve with lemon.

If sautéing lamb, preheat oven to 300°F. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in heavy large skillet over high heat. Add ⅓ of lamb. Sauté until brown and medium-rare, 5 to 6 minutes. Spoon onto baking sheet; keep warm in oven. Repeat 2 more times with remaining lamb. Arrange lamb atop arugula; serve with lemon.

ROASTED PORK CHOPS WITH FRISÉE, LARDONS, AND FRIED EGGS

6 SERVINGS/

At Mia Dona, Donatella Arpaia and Michael Psilakis's new hot spot in New York, artisanal Italian ingredients—fennel pollen and Gorgonzola—amp up the flavors of this French bistro-style dish.

- ¾ cup crumbled Gorgonzola cheese or other blue cheese, divided
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons chopped shallot
- 1½ teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1 garlic clove, peeled
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil plus more for grilling pork
- 2 tablespoons mustard seeds
- 1 6-bone untrimmed pork rib roast, chine bone removed (about 3 pounds)
- 1 teaspoon fennel pollen* or ground fennel seeds
- 4 slices bacon, thinly cut crosswise (lardons)
- 8 cups frisée, coarsely torn
- 2 7-ounce jars cocktail onions, drained
- 6 large eggs

Blend ¼ cup cheese, vinegar, shallot, Dijon mustard, garlic, and oregano in processor until smooth. Gradually blend in ½ cup oil. Transfer dressing to bowl; whisk in mustard seeds and season to taste with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Sprinkle pork all over with salt and pepper, then fennel. Heat heavy large skillet over high heat. Place pork in skillet. Sear on all sides until brown, 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer pork to roasting pan. Roast until thermometer inserted into thickest part registers 145°F, about 1 hour 25 minutes (roast will be cooked further). Let roast stand at room temperature 30 minutes.

Cook bacon in large skillet over medium-high heat until brown and crisp. Using slotted spoon, transfer lardons to paper towels. Whisk 1 tablespoon bacon drippings

FOR PRODUCT DETAILS, SEE SOURCEBOOK.

into salad dressing. Reserve skillet.

Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat). Cut pork roast between bones into 6 individual chops. Brush with oil; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill (or sauté in 2 skillets) until cooked to medium, 2 to 3 minutes per side.

Meanwhile, place frisée in large bowl. Add lardons, onions, and remaining ½ cup cheese. Toss with enough dressing to coat. Divide salad among 6 plates.

Arrange 1 pork chop next to salad on each plate. Heat bacon drippings in reserved skillet over medium-high heat. Drop in eggs. Fry eggs without turning until cooked to desired doneness. Place 1 egg on each chop.

*/ A Tuscan spice extracted from young wild fennel plants; available at specialty foods stores or from zingermans.com.

Contorni

ROASTED BEETS IN MUSTARD CREAM

8 SERVINGS/

An Italian heirloom beet variety (the candy-cane-striped Chioggia from Veneto) is utilized in this intensely sauced, rustic side from Alba Osteria & Enoteca, a small 48-seat restaurant in Portland, Oregon.

- 25 small (about 1½-inch) beets in assorted colors (such as red, golden, and Chioggia), unpeeled, trimmed
- Olive oil
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme

Preheat oven to 400°F. Group beets by color on sheets of foil; drizzle with oil. Close tightly and place packets directly on oven rack. Roast beets until tender, about 50 minutes. Open foil; cool and peel beets.

Bring cream, mustard, and thyme to boil in medium saucepan. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until reduced to 1⅔ cups, 15 to 20 minutes.

Arrange beets in 11x7x2-inch glass baking dish; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Add cream mixture. Bake until sauce is bubbling, about 25 minutes.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH PANCETTA

6 SERVINGS/

Alba Osteria & Enoteca (named after the Piedmontese city) uses a classic Italian formula—green veggies plus cured pork—with great results.

- 1 pound small brussels sprouts, trimmed, halved through root ends
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- ¼ pound ⅛-inch-thick slices pancetta (Italian bacon), cut crosswise into ⅓-inch-wide strips
- 1½ teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
- 1½ teaspoons chopped fresh sage

Cook brussels sprouts in saucepan of boiling salted water until tender. Drain.

Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Sauté pancetta until crisp. Spoon off all but 1 tablespoon drippings.

Add warm brussels sprouts to skillet; sprinkle with thyme and sage. Sauté over high heat just until heated through and vegetables begin to brown at edges, about 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve.

Dolci

CHEESE OR CHOCOLATE SEBADAS

MAKES ABOUT 24 CHEESE OR CHOCOLATE SEBADAS/

This Sardinian specialty is essentially fried ravioli filled with cheese (and, in this case, chocolate). For a photo, see page 161. Sardinia Enoteca Ristorante in Miami (owned by a native of the island—chef Pietro Vardeu) serves them with the recently rediscovered chestnut honey from Italy, which has a rich, bold flavor. Look for chocolate-hazelnut spread in the peanut butter or baking section of the supermarket or specialty foods store.

CHEESE FILLING

- 1½ cups coarsely grated Brinata or aged Manchego cheese (6 to 7 ounces)
- 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon peel
- 1 tablespoon beaten egg

CHOCOLATE FILLING

- 3½ ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped (about ½ cup)
- ½ cup chocolate-hazelnut spread (such as Nutella)
- 1 tablespoon finely grated orange peel

DOUGH AND ASSEMBLY

- ½ cup semolina flour (pasta flour)*
- ½ cup all purpose flour
- Pinch of salt
- 6 tablespoons (about) whole milk, divided
- Fresh mint leaves (for cheese)
- 1 large egg, beaten to blend
- 2 cups olive oil (for frying)
- Sugar
- Chestnut honey or other honey

CHEESE FILLING/ Mix all ingredients in medium bowl. Cover and chill until ready to use, up to 1 day.

CHOCOLATE FILLING/ Mix all ingredients in medium bowl. Cover and let stand until ready to use, up to 1 day.

DOUGH AND ASSEMBLY/ Mix semolina flour, all purpose flour, and salt in large bowl to blend. Add 4 tablespoons milk and toss until moist dough forms, adding more milk by tablespoonfuls if dry. Gather dough into ball. Knead on lightly floured surface until smooth, about 1 minute. Wrap dough in plastic wrap and chill 1 hour.

Line large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper; dust with flour. Knead dough to soften. Divide into 4 pieces; cover with plastic wrap to prevent drying. Set pasta machine to widest setting. Flatten 1 dough piece into rectangle; run though machine. Fold in half, end to end, and run through machine again. Continue, adjusting to next-narrower setting after every 4 or 5 passes and dusting with all purpose flour as needed to keep from sticking, until sheet is 22 to 24 inches long and about 1⁄16 inch thick. Cover with plastic wrap to prevent drying. Roll out second dough strip to same length and thickness.

Drop cheese or chocolate filling onto 1 dough strip by heaping teaspoonfuls, spacing about 1½ inches apart. Place ½ mint leaf on each mound of cheese filling. Brush dough around filling with beaten egg. Top with second dough strip; press dough around mounds to seal. Using pastry wheel or 2-inch round or square ravioli cutter, cut out sebadas. Transfer to prepared sheet.

Repeat with remaining dough and cheese or chocolate filling. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 hours ahead. Cover loosely with towel and let stand at room temperature.

Pour oil into heavy large skillet. Place deep-fry thermometer in oil (leaning top over rim of skillet) and heat to 375°F over medium-high heat. Working in batches, fry sebadas until dough is crisp and golden and filling is cooked through, about 1 minute per side. Transfer to paper towels and drain.

Arrange sebadas on platter. Sprinkle with sugar; serve with chestnut honey.

*/ Available at some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Italian markets.

TEST-KITCHEN TIP/ This recipe calls for Brinata, a specific kind of pecorino *fresco* (fresh pecorino). Pecorino *fresco* is a sheep's-milk cheese that is milder in taste and softer (like soft Fontina) than Pecorino Toscano or Pecorino Romano. Look for pecorino *fresco* at your local cheese shop or buy it online at murrayscheese.com or agferrari.com. Manchego cheese, which is also made from sheep's milk, is a good substitute. /■

FOR MORE DELICIOUS ITALIAN RECIPES, CHECK OUT OUR "FAVORITE ITALIAN DISHES" SLIDE SHOW AT *bonappetit.com.*

FOOD STYLING BY VICTORIA GRANOF; PROP STYLING BY ALISON SCHERR. RECTANGULAR MARGOT TABLE IN OPENING SPREAD BY DUNE; DESIGNER SARAH FELS.



Gott

BURGER MAVEN JOEL GOTT DOES THE COLESLAW. LEGENDARY CHEF THOMAS KELLER FRIES UP THE CHICKEN. IT'S JUST ANOTHER DINNER IN THE NAPA VALLEY—AND YOU'RE INVITED.

THIS PAGE: Joel Gott and his daughter Lucy. **OPPOSITE:** Thomas Keller



Keller?

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Elena Dorfman**
TEXT BY **Phil Barber**
PRODUCED BY **Karin Fittante** AND **Mara Papatheodorou**

Thomas Keller

ties himself into an apron. Joel Gott does not. "I have three kids, so I usually just hose myself down," Gott explains.

For a few blissful hours on a summer's day in St. Helena, California, there are no James Beard Awards, no tables to be turned, no profit or loss for these two. Keller and Gott are just two guys cooking dinner for family and friends.

Yes, Keller is one of the most admired chefs on the planet, a culinary Midas whose destination restaurants now include the one-and-only French Laundry in Yountville, California; Bouchon in Northern California, Las Vegas, and New York; Manhattan's Per Se; and his most recent addition, the family-style Ad Hoc in Napa Valley. And Gott is legendary in his own right, along with his brother, Duncan, having turned burger stand Taylor's Automatic Refresher into a Wine Country landmark and spun it off in San Francisco and Napa's Oxbow Public Market.

Downtime is rare for these two guys, but they have come together to collaborate on dinner at Gott's home. The kitchen area used to be five small rooms, before the Gotts—Joel and his winemaker wife, Sarah—reinvented it as a single, airy space. Food is prepped on a huge soapstone island and cooked at a four-burner Wolf stove with a big French top.

Keller is the antithesis of the bombastic made-for-TV chef. He is meticulous and focused, his voice sometimes barely rising above a whisper as he chats with Gott. After years spent running high-intensity restaurant kitchens, he is unflappable. That's a good thing, because real life keeps intruding on the dinner plans. Here comes James, the Gotts' 3½-year-old son, crashing into the house holding a basket full of lemons and limes and squealing, "Daddy, I have oranges for you!"

The family meal has always been a staple for Gott. He grew up in a wine-industry family, and his parents often entertained clients. In fact, the pancetta-wrapped shrimp that Gott will grill this afternoon is his mother's recipe. Despite his many obligations, the Taylor's co-founder rarely misses a dinner with Sarah and the children.

Keller had a very different upbringing. In a house run by a single, working mom, dinner was usually whatever Thomas's older brother foraged from the fridge and cupboard that night. Hot dogs and grilled-cheese sandwiches were the norm.

By the time he had fully realized his genius in the kitchen, Keller understood what he had missed. Perhaps making up for lost time, he has imbued Ad Hoc with the atmosphere of an intimate dinner party, or at least a trip back in time to the local diner. The servers wear uniforms that seem a cross between soda jerk and vintage filling-station attendant, and there is no stemware. Dishes are served family-style.

"All we do is open the wine and put it on the table, and everybody can help themselves," Keller says.

As guests David and Renee Green arrive and Sarah wrangles the kids, kitchen talk turns to guilty culinary pleasures. Keller, it turns out, has some very unpretentious habits. He loves In-N-Out hamburgers, and he got the idea for Sunday sundaes—a recurring feature of the Ad Hoc brunch—from American Airlines' business class.

While Joel finely chops red cabbage for a coleslaw, Keller turns his attention to the chicken. Fried Chicken Night began as an every-other-week event at Ad Hoc, but it was so popular that Keller now does it weekly, alternating Mondays and Wednesdays.

"I ran a triathlon in May," Gott tells him. "We had a team, and some friends of mine were another team. The bet was for fried chicken at Ad Hoc. We won. It was delicious."

After studiously checking a thermometer to gauge the temperature of his cooking oil in a deep-sided six-quart pan, Keller begins the five-step process: The chicken goes from bowl to spice-mix coating to buttermilk bath, back to the coating, then into the oil for anywhere from 6 to 13 minutes. Keller gently turns each piece a few times. The glistening pieces of chicken then rest on a cooling rack. He finishes the dish by tossing sprigs of fresh rosemary and thyme into the oil for a few minutes, using the crispy bits to garnish the chicken.

OPPOSITE:
Joel (center, left) and Sarah's (next to Joel) big backyard serves as the dining room—and the playground. Friends Renee and David Green (far right) and their son, Jack (sitting on the ground), have joined the Gotts and chef Keller (center, right) this evening. While the grown-ups eat and the other kids play, Sarah and Joel's younger daughter, Lael, takes a pink-lemonade break.

In the big backyard, the fading afternoon is warm and bright. A towering oak tree provides the shade, and the children—the Gotts' trio and 6-year-old Jack Green—provide the laughter and the soap bubbles. James backs up in a kiddie car and doesn't forget to add the cautionary "beep-beep-beep." Jack's pitch count nears 100 as he throws a tennis ball to Mickey, the Gotts' affectionate German shepherd.

Five-year-old Lucy Gott performs an equestrian trick, nursing her shake while balancing on a rocking horse. Someone asks her what she thinks of the meal, which, after all, was prepared in part by one of the greatest chefs on the planet. Lucy? Lucy? She's far too busy to answer.



WHO/
SARAH & JOEL GOTT

OCCUPATIONS/
Sarah's the winemaker of Joel Gott Wines, which she and Joel own together. Joel and his brother, Duncan, own Taylor's Automatic Refresher in St. Helena, San Francisco, and Napa.

PARTY PHILOSOPHY/
"We love to entertain with friends and their kids," says Joel. "For us, it's important to keep the kids involved in the party. They help us with cooking and prep and we all eat at the same table. There's no need to separate them at a kids' table."

WHO/
THOMAS KELLER

OCCUPATION/
Über chef whose restaurants include Ad Hoc in Napa Valley; Manhattan's Per Se; Bouchon in Northern California, Las Vegas, and New York; and the make-a-reservation-one-year-ahead French Laundry in Yountville, California.

PARTY PHILOSOPHY/
"I don't have a lot of time to prepare, so I keep things simple," says Thomas. "I like to make things that my guests can easily pick up with their hands. It sets a relaxing mood and makes it easier to socialize."



“THERE’S NO REAL SECRET RECIPE TO IT. *I LIKE THE SPICINESS. I LIKE THE HERBS. THE CHICKEN HAS FLAVOR THAT TESTIFIES TO THE BRINING.* IT’S PRETTY STRAIGHTFORWARD. A CLASSIC REFERENCE POINT YOU CAN RELATE TO.” —THOMAS KELLER



MENU FOR 10 TO 12

GRILLED PANCETTA-WRAPPED SHRIMP WITH CREAMY HERB DRESSING

CALIFORNIA CHARDONNAY

THOMAS KELLER'S BUTTERMILK FRIED CHICKEN

COLESLAW WITH CUMIN, CARAWAY, AND CELERY SEEDS

CHEDDAR AND GREEN ONION CORNBREAD

CALIFORNIA ZINFANDEL

PINK LEMONADE (FOR THE KIDS)

STEAMED BROWNIES WITH MINI CHOCOLATE AND PEANUT BUTTER MILK SHAKES

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Jack, Renee, David, and Sarah can't resist the KFC (Keller Fried Chicken).

GRILLED PANCETTA-WRAPPED SHRIMP WITH CREAMY HERB DRESSING

10 TO 12 SERVINGS/

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 1 green onion, coarsely chopped
- 1½ tablespoons coarsely chopped fresh Italian parsley
- ½ garlic clove
- 1 teaspoon fresh lime juice
- 20 to 24 uncooked large shrimp, peeled, deveined, tails left intact
- 20 to 24 thin slices pancetta (Italian bacon)
- 20 to 24 toothpicks, soaked in water 30 minutes, drained
- Olive oil
- Nonstick vegetable oil spray

Blend first 6 ingredients in processor until parsley is finely chopped. Pour dressing into small bowl; cover and chill until cold, at least 1 hour.

Place shrimp on baking sheet. Wrap 1 pancetta slice around each shrimp; secure with toothpick. Brush with oil. Sprinkle with pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 4 hours ahead; cover and chill.

Spray grill rack with nonstick spray. Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat). Grill shrimp until cooked through and pancetta is crisp, turning occasionally, about 6 minutes. Remove toothpicks. Place bowl of dressing on platter. Arrange shrimp around bowl.

WHAT TO DRINK/ Because they own Joel Gott Wines, Sarah and Joel always have a good bottle to pour with dinner. With the shrimp, they like the 2006 Joel Gott Chardonnay, Monterey County ($15). The crisp, light wine has citrus and pear notes.

THOMAS KELLER'S BUTTERMILK FRIED CHICKEN

MAKES 24 PIECES/

Keller's secret is brining, which makes the chicken incredibly moist. Don't brine the chicken longer than 24 hours; it may get too salty. For our tips on perfect fried food at home, see "Prep School" on page 156.

BRINING

- 24 cups water
- 1 cup coarse kosher salt
- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon honey
- 18 Turkish bay leaves
- 30 unpeeled garlic cloves, smashed
- 3 tablespoons whole black peppercorns
- 5 large fresh rosemary sprigs
- 1½ bunches fresh thyme sprigs
- 1½ bunches fresh Italian parsley
- 2 tablespoons finely grated lemon peel
- ¾ cup fresh lemon juice
- 3 3½-pound chickens

FRYING

- 6 cups all purpose flour
- 5 tablespoons garlic powder
- 5 tablespoons onion powder
- 4 teaspoons paprika
- 4 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 teaspoons coarse kosher salt plus additional for serving
- 6 cups buttermilk
- 12 cups peanut oil (for deep-frying)
- Fresh rosemary and thyme sprigs (for garnish), deep-fried 30 seconds (optional)

BRINING/ Bring all ingredients except chickens to boil in large pot. Boil 1 minute, stirring to dissolve salt. Cool completely. Chill brine until cold, about 2 hours.

Rinse chickens; add to brine, pressing to submerge. Chill at least 12 hours and up to 24 hours. Drain chickens and pat dry, removing any herbs or spices sticking to skin. Cut each chicken into 8 pieces.

FRYING/ Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper. Mix first 6 ingredients and 4 teaspoons coarse salt in large bowl. Place buttermilk in another large bowl. Dip each chicken piece in flour mixture to coat; shake off excess. Dip pieces in buttermilk, coating completely, then dip into flour mixture again, coating thickly (do not shake off excess). Place chicken on prepared sheets. Let stand 1 to 2 hours at room temperature to dry.

Pour peanut oil into heavy large pot. Attach deep-fry thermometer to side of pot and heat oil over medium-high heat to 320°F to 330°F. Working in batches of 4 pieces at a time, add leg and thigh pieces to oil (use splatter screen to protect yourself from hot oil). Adjust heat as needed to maintain temperature. Fry until cooked through and skin is deep golden brown, turning once with wooden spoons (to prevent crust from breaking), about 13 minutes. Using wooden spoons, transfer chicken to paper towels to drain. Sprinkle with coarse salt.

Add breast pieces to oil and fry until cooked through and skin is deep golden brown, turning once, about 7 minutes. Transfer chicken to paper towels to drain. Sprinkle with coarse salt.

Transfer chicken to platter. Serve warm or let stand up to 2 hours and serve at room temperature. Garnish with herb sprigs.

WHAT TO DRINK/ With the chicken, Joel and Sarah suggest the 2006 Joel Gott Zinfandel, Lodi ($25). The full-flavored wine has hints of nutmeg, cinnamon, cedar, and black pepper.

COLESLAW WITH CUMIN, CARAWAY, AND CELERY SEEDS

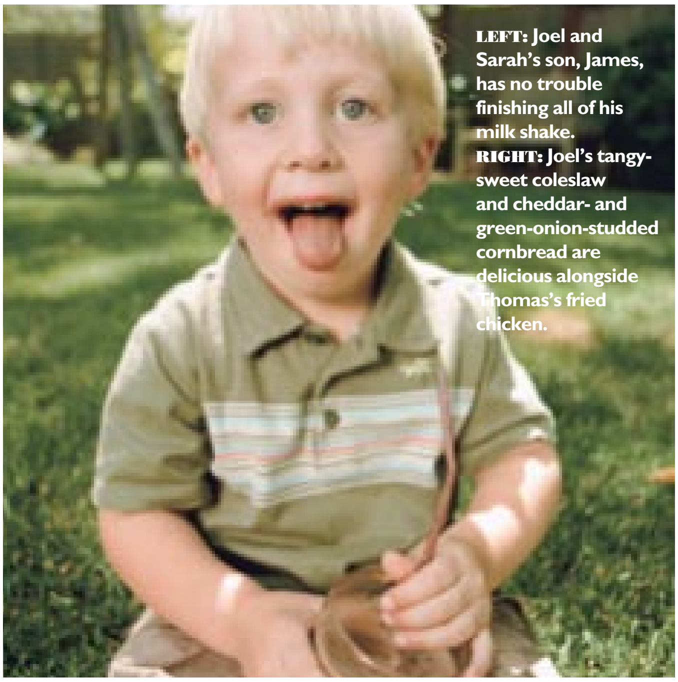
10 TO 12 SERVINGS/

- 8 cups thinly sliced green cabbage (from 1 small head)
- 8 cups thinly sliced red cabbage (from 1 small head)
- 3 large carrots, coarsely grated
- 1 bunch radishes (10 to 12), trimmed, coarsely grated
- 2 teaspoons coarse kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon cumin seeds
- ¼ teaspoon caraway seeds
- ¼ teaspoon celery seeds
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons buttermilk
- 1½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1½ tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon (packed) golden brown sugar

Combine first 4 ingredients in large colander set over large bowl; sprinkle with coarse salt and toss well. Let drain at least 2 hours and up to 4 hours. Press excess water from vegetables and transfer to another large bowl.

Stir cumin, caraway, and celery seeds in heavy small skillet over medium heat just until fragrant and beginning to pop, about 4 minutes. Transfer seeds to processor; add mayonnaise, cream, buttermilk, lemon juice, vinegar, and sugar and blend well. **DO AHEAD** Dressing can be made 4 hours ahead. Cover and refrigerate.

Pour dressing over cabbage mixture and toss to coat.





LEFT: Joel and Sarah's son, James, has no trouble finishing all of his milk shake. **RIGHT:** Joel's tangy-sweet coleslaw and cheddar- and green-onion-studded cornbread are delicious alongside Thomas's fried chicken.

CHEDDAR AND GREEN ONION CORNBREAD

10 TO 12 SERVINGS/

- 8½ tablespoons butter, melted, divided
- 1 cup chopped green onions
- 1¾ cups yellow cornmeal
- 1¼ cups all purpose flour
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1½ cups buttermilk
- 3 large eggs
- 1½ cups grated sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 cup fresh corn kernels
- ½ cup chopped roasted red bell peppers from jar
- 2 tablespoons chopped seeded jalapeño chiles

Preheat oven to 400°F. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in 10-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat. Add green onions; sauté 5 minutes. Transfer to small bowl.

Mix next 6 ingredients in large bowl. Whisk buttermilk and eggs in medium bowl; stir into dry ingredients. Stir in 7 tablespoons melted butter, then cheese, corn, red pepper, chiles, and green onions.

Add ½ tablespoon melted butter to skillet; heat over high heat until foamy, about 1 minute. Pour batter into skillet. Transfer to oven; bake cornbread until golden, about 40 minutes. Cool 20 minutes in skillet.

STEAMED BROWNIES WITH MINI CHOCOLATE AND PEANUT BUTTER MILK SHAKES

MAKES 18/

Steaming the brownies gives them a texture similar to flourless chocolate cake. For a photo, see page 161.

- 12 tablespoons (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, diced
- 6 ounces bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 1½ cups sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ⅔ cup all purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Lightly sweetened whipped cream
- Chopped peanut brittle
- Mini Chocolate and Peanut Butter Milk Shakes (see recipe)

Preheat oven to 325°F. Butter two 8x8-inch metal baking pans. Line pans with foil; butter foil and dust with flour.

Stir 12 tablespoons butter and all chocolate in large saucepan over low heat just until melted. Cool 5 minutes. Whisk in sugar, then eggs, 1 at a time. Mix in vanilla. Add flour and salt; stir just until blended. Divide batter between pans; smooth with spatula (batter will form thin layer).

Bake brownies until tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 25 minutes. Cool completely in pans.

Cut each brownie cake into 9 brownies. Place each brownie on 3½-inch square of parchment paper. Add enough water to large wide pot to reach depth of ½ inch. Place steamer rack in pot. Arrange half of brownies (still on parchment) on rack in single layer. Bring water to boil. Cover pot and steam brownies until soft and warm, 3 to 5 minutes. Repeat with remaining brownies. Transfer 1 brownie on parchment to each plate. Top with whipped cream and peanut brittle. Serve with shakes.

MINI CHOCOLATE AND PEANUT BUTTER MILK SHAKES

MAKES 10 TO 12/

- 4½ cups chocolate ice cream
- 1½ cups whole milk
- ½ cup creamy peanut butter

Blend half of ice cream, half of milk, and half of peanut butter in blender until smooth. Divide shake among 5 or 6 very small glasses. Repeat with remaining ice cream, milk, and peanut butter. /■

Phil Barber is a reporter for The Press Democrat *in Santa Rosa, California.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.



Tokyo, COCKTAIL CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

IN THE CITY'S BACK ALLEYS, SUBBASEMENTS, AND SKYSCRAPERS, JAPAN'S BARTENDERS HAVE PERFECTED THE FINE ART OF MIXOLOGY

BY **Hugh Garvey**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Tony Law**



I'm hungover in Tokyo,

trying to remember how many drinks I had the night before. *Does the beer at the yakitori place count?* The backlit shelves of shrunken liquor bottles in my hotel mini bar give me flashbacks. *Did I actually finish that precisely mixed Sidecar?* Below the airplane bottles is a shelf of elegantly proportioned highballs and lowballs. *That was cask-strength Scotch bottled specially for Ginza; 110 proof. Suntory time, indeed.* Midway through a weeklong high-end bar crawl, I'm learning that this city takes its drinking very seriously. In Tokyo, the mini bars actually look like miniature bars.

My friend Shinji Nohara calls up from the lobby. He was out with me until two in the morning, yet claims he feels tip-top. When he says we should go for tempura, I know he's lying. A fried-food lunch is international code for "I'm hungover." Two bottles of Kirin and a hundred dollars' worth of fried fish later, we feel better and plan that evening's tour: First, the place that only serves drinks in Baccarat crystal, then the spot that specializes in *shochu* infused with seasonal fruit, then the lounge presided over by an up-and-coming female bartender. Followed by the inevitable tempura lunch. Such are the hazards of researching a story about a city of countless hidden speakeasies, impossibly artistic mixology, and infinite drinks. Welcome to Tokyo, cocktail capital of the world.

I'M HERE BECAUSE I'VE HEARD from professional foodies, itinerant bartenders, and other bibulous travelers that Tokyo was besting New York and London at the cocktail game. Mixologists from Sydney to San Juan were returning from pilgrimages and breathlessly describing their experiences as epiphanic. Bartenders were attending traveling seminars to learn Japanese technique. So, armed with a sheaf of recommendations and my friend Shinji as translator and guide, I hit the streets, subbasements, and skyscrapers of Tokyo to experience this cocktail revolution firsthand.

In that sparkling, sprawling metropolis of 12.8 million people, there is as structured and codified a drinking culture as any in the world: At *izakayas* (Japanese pubs), salarymen are allowed to criticize their managers under the cover of alcohol. *Sake* and *shochu* are sold in vending machines on street corners. And as the evening draws to a close, it's not uncommon to see salarymen stumbling for the trains and taxis. Drinking is a culturally accepted form of extreme relaxation in an otherwise excessively civilized city.



I fill up with a defensive meal of yakitori beneath the Yurakucho Station train tracks and watch the city transition out of its workday and into its nightlife. Here, on the edge of Ginza, salarymen eat grilled chicken and drink beer before heading home or out for the night. Here is where mixology first took hold in the cafés nearly 100 years ago, and where legendary Tokyo bartender Kazuo Uyeda practices his craft today. To get to Tender Bar, you take an elevator to the fifth floor of an office building. If you see a salon with geishas getting their hair coiffed, you're on the right floor.

Uyeda is slim and dapper in his white dinner jacket and wire-rimmed aviators. He has invented some of Japan's cocktail canon: the Pure Love, made with gin, framboise, lime juice, and ginger ale, and the Shungyo, made of *sake,* vodka, green tea liqueur, and salted cherry blossom. Both were invented in the early '80s, when in America a Margarita made with fresh lime and real tequila was still a rarity. As his assistant bartenders prepare for the evening rush by hand-carving ice cubes, Uyeda tells me how, over the decades, Japanese bartenders preserved the American art of the cocktail while American bartenders

neglected it. "The difference is that American bartenders aren't thinking enough about the customer," he says.

It's a bold statement, but compared to how Uyeda thinks about the art of bartending, it's true. Uyeda says that his approach to cocktail-making is grounded in the Japanese tea ceremony. It is an "adoration of the beautiful among the sordid facts of everyday existence. It inculcates purity and harmony, the mystery of mutual charity, the romanticism of the social order." Which is a pretty accurate description of how it feels to be in his elegant little bar, having white-jacketed bartenders mix perfect drinks while men in slim suits and women in wrap dresses and beehive hairdos chat quietly over cocktails with names like M-30 Rain and Tokio.

I learned about Uyeda through the online writings of Stanislav Vadrna, a Slovakian bartender who apprenticed under Uyeda. Vadrna teaches classes in Japanese bartending and has become a missionary of sorts, preaching the gospel of the "hard shake," Uyeda's signature technique, which purportedly produces a drink a full ten degrees colder than a standard shake does.

To see the hard shake in action, I order a gimlet and witness for the first time a precision that will be repeated at all the bars I visit in Tokyo: Uyeda lines up the bottles on the bar, labels facing the customer. With a single, quick twist he opens them and fills the shaker, which he shakes in a rapid-fire serpentine fashion that decelerates to a slow trot and then a standstill. "The gin is broken out," Uyeda says, "then comes back together, smoother, softer." Indeed, the drink contains

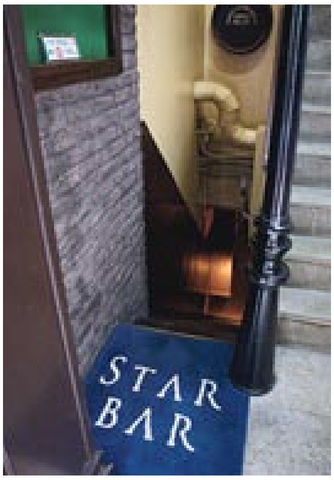
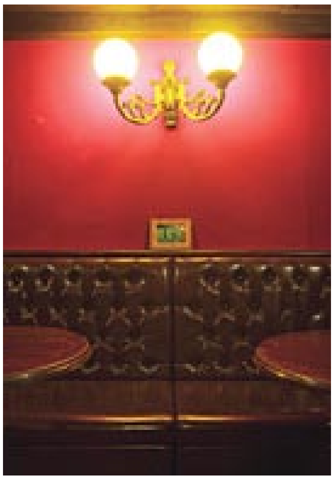
HIGH AND DRY
At the Park Hyatt Tokyo hotel's New York Bar, some of the city's best cocktails, including a perfectly dry Martini, are shaken and served at the highest elevation in all of Tokyo.



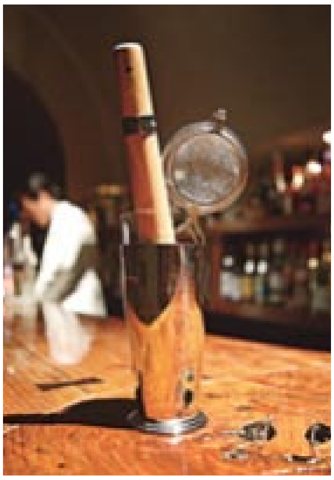
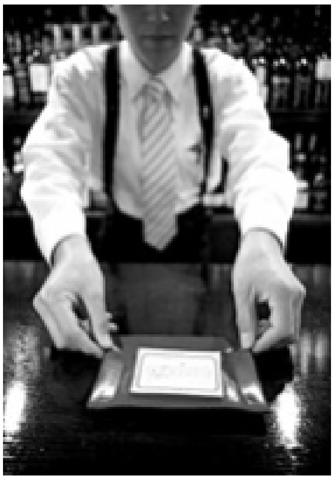
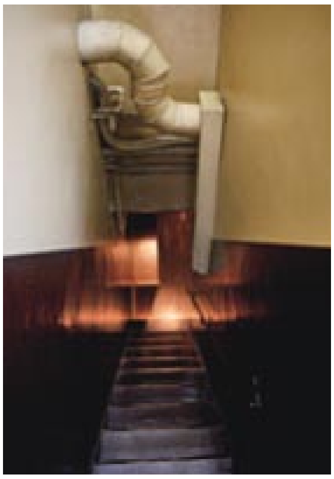


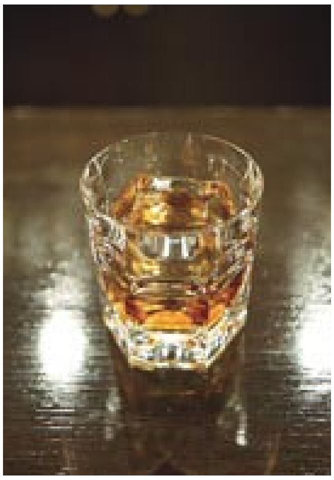
"COCKTAIL-MAKING IS AN ADORATION OF *THE BEAUTIFUL* AMONG THE SORDID FACTS OF EVERYDAY EXISTENCE. IT INCULCATES PURITY AND HARMONY, THE MYSTERY OF MUTUAL CHARITY, *THE ROMANTICISM OF THE SOCIAL ORDER.*"

THIS PAGE Two stories underground, Little Smith serves artisanal cocktails with an eye toward seasonality. **OPPOSITE** *From top, left to right:* The humble entrance staircase leading to Star Bar Ginza. A clubby banquette at Star Bar. A bucket of hand-carved ice at Star Bar. Bartenders Fumiyasu "Mimi" Mimitsuka and Daiji Uehashi at Little Smith. Hidetsugu Ueno carves ice at Star Bar. A muddler and strainer. A handwritten bill arrives. The stairs to Star Bar. The watermelon Martini at Little Smith. Suntory whiskey on ice. A honeydew melon and Champagne cocktail at Shoto-Club. Star Bar's superlative dry Martini. An artisanal Bloody Mary at Little Smith starts with muddled tomato. Restaurant stalls underneath the Yurakucho Station train tracks. Ueno's diamond-shape carved ice. The Shoto-Club makes its Moscow Mule with fresh ginger and lime.


STAR
BAR








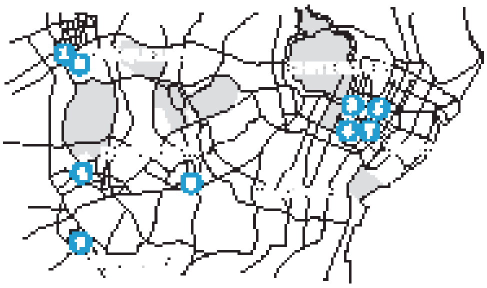






Tokyo, Straight Up

HERE'S WHERE TO TASTE THE BEST OF TOKYO'S COCKTAIL REVOLUTION



MAP BY JASON LEE

1 NEW YORK BAR AT THE PARK HYATT TOKYO
Fifty-two stories above the Shinjuku neighborhood, this bar serves up a stunning skyline view and solid drinks, but no bar counter. In the evening there's live jazz and a cover charge. Kobe hamburgers, fries, and other menu items can be ordered from the New York Grill restaurant. *3-7-1-2 Nishi-Shinjuku, 52nd Floor, Shinjuku-ku; 011-81-3-5322-1234*

2 THE PEAK BAR AT THE PARK HYATT TOKYO
At the more intimate and subdued Peak Bar, 11 floors below New York Bar, you can actually watch a bartender mix up drinks behind the little counter. *3-7-1-2 Nishi-Shinjuku, 41st Floor, Shinjuku-ku; 011-81-3-5322-1234*

3 PETER AT THE PENINSULA TOKYO
The penthouse bar at the brand-new Peninsula Tokyo hotel in Marunouchi is space-age groovy and has an incredible view. The short drink list features cocktails that lean toward the sweet and subtle. *1-8-1 Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku; 011-81-3-6270-2763*

4 SHOTO-CLUB
At this tiny spot near Shinjuku, young bartenders sport slicked-back hair and plaid vests. Edith Piaf plays on the sound system, and the drinks (like the persimmon Champagne cocktail) are seasonal and perfect. *Kazama Building B1F, 37-12 Udagawacho, Shibuya-ku; 011-81-3-3465-1932*

5 STAR BAR GINZA
An ideal bar: dark brown leather banquettes, an extensive Scotch selection, precise technique, and a friendly staff. *Sankosha Building B1F, 1-5-13 Ginza, Chuo-ku; 011-81-3-3535-8005*

6 LITTLE SMITH
It's amazing to find such an elegant and modern space two stories below street level. A *Barbarella* meets *Casablanca* scene. Young, hip bartenders. Young, well-heeled crowd. *KN Building B2F, 6-4-12 Ginza, Chuo-ku; 011-81-3-5568-1993*

7 TENDER BAR
At this old-school Tokyo speakeasy on the fifth floor of a nondescript office building, master mixologist Kazuo Uyeda practices his art. Order a gimlet or other fruit-based cocktail to watch the famed "hard shake" in action. *Nogakudo Building, 6-5-15 Ginza, Chuo-ku; 011-81-3-3571-8343*

8 BAR WODKA TONIC
There's another branch in flashy Roppongi Hills, but this spot in the Nishi-Azabu neighborhood is the real deal. Even when you sit at a far-off booth, the bartenders come out and take your order, ensuring an incredible drink. *Tamura Building B1, 2-25-11 Nishi-Azabu, Minato-ku; 011-81-3-3400-5474*

9 HIGASHIYA
Go upstairs at this Daikanyama teahouse and patisserie for tea or seasonal infused *shochus;* in fall, get the apple and persimmon *shochu.* Here, the modern tea ceremony and a minimalist modern mixology coexist. *1-13-12 Aobadai, Meguro-ku; 011-81-3-5428-1717*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

> **"THE CITY'S MOST SKILLED BARTENDERS ARE MODERN-DAY PRACTITIONERS OF THE MEIJI-ERA TRADITION: TAKING THE WEST AND EAST AND FUSING THE TWO WITH THE UTMOST RESPECT."**

a profusion of fine ice shards, and the acid from the lime and the alcohol in the gin have both mellowed. It's a bit light for my taste. Not a bad thing, given the night I have ahead of me.

OUTSIDE, TOKYO IS IN full swing, the streets crowded with students and salarymen. Two geishas gently help a drunken patron into a taxi, while the driver patiently waits, behaving as if the impeccable white lace doilies in the backseat aren't in peril. We turn off onto a side street, into an office building, and head two stories underground to Little Smith, where more white-jacketed bartenders stand behind a striking oval-shape, hand-hewn wooden bar. I say "omakase" to one, who smiles instantly. The phrase is usually spoken to sushi chefs when you want them to devise a special tasting menu. It means "I trust you." He instantly earns my trust by muddling Ukrainian chile-pepper vodka and a whole cooked tomato into an artisanal Bloody Mary.

VESTED INTEREST
Opposite, from left: **Bartenders Takeru Mashiko, Takumi Tsugawa, and Ryoji Kodama at the intimate Shoto-Club near Shinjuku.**

Then it's on to Star Bar Ginza, where I have seven of the best drinks of my trip. Hidetsugu Ueno, the head bartender there, is so obsessive about his craft that he even makes his own bar snacks. He cures his own Japanese version of Spanish-style *jamón* in the mountains of the Akita Prefecture because he finds the traditional stuff too salty to serve with single malt Scotch. And Ueno's care with the bar snacks is just the beginning: When he stirs a Martini (and it will most definitely be stirred, not shaken), he uses a combination of chilled and room-temperature gin to achieve the proper viscosity. He shakes certain cocktails in a soft-sided plastic container to keep the ice from chipping too much. His ever-evolving drink menu is beyond seasonal: In winter it might be Champagne mixed with pomelo, but only during that citrus fruit's fleeting two-week season. In summer, rum is paired with ripe Okinawa mango.

It's autumn, so we have pear gin and tonics. And then fresh grape Tom Collinses. And then Gaja grappa. And then Madeira from 1968. "My birth year," says Ueno. We have Sidecars, which are perfectly balanced. He carves us a perfectly spherical ice diamond with no fewer than 14 facets. And over the ice goes Scotch. My final memory of the night is Shinji shaking my hand, expressing his eternal gratitude for showing him something so transcendent in his hometown. I don't know which of the drinks is talking, but I do know it's breakfast time in the U.S. and bedtime in Tokyo.

I BLAME A BAR BACK IN NEW YORK for the headache I have here in Tokyo the next day. At Angel's Share in Manhattan's East Village, I first became fascinated with Japanese-style bartending. The bartenders were Japanese and wore bow ties and crisp white shirts and shook textbook-perfect classic cocktails in gleaming vintage shakers. It was the coolest, old-schoolest, Jazz Age mixological marvel I'd ever seen. Influential bartenders, like Sasha Petraske of the New York neo-speakeasy Milk & Honey, credit Angel's Share as inspiration.

To put this all in perspective—and to take a much-needed break—I visit Tokyo's Meiji Jingu shrine, on the edge of the Harujuku neighborhood, home to fashion boutiques and Tokyo's wild teenage street style. On the path leading to the shrine, I pass through a canyon of alcohol. On one side of the path is a 20-foot wall of *sake* barrels. Across from that is a rack of 50 barrels of exceptional Bordeaux. These are offerings to the temple spirits and a symbol of the Japanese tradition of cross-cultural exchange. This tradition was first ushered in by Emperor Meiji in the late 19th century, the era in which the Savile Row suit became the standard uniform of the Japanese salaryman and French food became all the rage.

The Meiji period also just happened to coincide with the golden age of the cocktail in Europe and America. During the Meiji period, the first cocktails were served in Tokyo in Ginza cafés like Café Printemps and Café Lion, which employed bartenders who'd learned the craft at the luxury hotels of Asia. They made the Bamboo and the Million Dollar and the Singapore Sling, cocktails served at The Grand Hotel in Yokohama and Raffles Hotel Singapore. Tokyo café society embraced these cocktails and the Japanese fascination with cocktails was born.

On my last night in Tokyo, at Peter, a bar at the top of the brand-new Peninsula Tokyo hotel, I realize that the city's most skilled bartenders are modern-day practitioners of the Meiji-era tradition: taking the West and East and fusing the two with the utmost respect. I'm there with Shinji and he can barely read the names of the drinks, which are written in a form of the kanji script usually reserved for writing haiku. "I haven't had to read this since grade school," he says. We order drinks that are inspired by and named for the seasons.

The walls of Peter are computerized. Guests appear to walk amid the Tokyo skyline that is projected onto the wall; as it morphs electronically, digitized leaves follow in the wake of diners heading to their tables. Shinji and I debate where to go next: Tokyo Kaikan, where the late, great Mr. Martini schooled Kazuo Uyeda? To the Imperial Hotel, where the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed bar is perfectly preserved? We think better of it. We've had enough for the night, and decide to toast the city. And here's where all the revelations of a cocktail tour of Tokyo cease to surprise. It comes down to the drink at hand and to living in the moment. And whether you're in an old *izakaya,* in a Ginza cocktail bar, or at the top of the newest luxury skyscraper hotel, that toast would still be "Kanpai." /■



FUNKY LITTLE PASTRY SHOPS ARE POPPING UP FROM OAKLAND TO BROOKLYN. INSIDE, YOU'LL FIND CASES STOCKED WITH GOODIES THAT WILL REMIND YOU OF HOME. BUT THESE AREN'T YOUR GRANDMA'S DESSERTS. THEY'RE NEW TWISTS ON THE AMERICAN DESSERTS WE LOVE MOST.

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KEY LIME CUPCAKE
Buttersweet Bakery/
Atlanta
recipe on page 131

OPPOSITE
CAPPUCCINO ÉCLAIR
Sucré/
New Orleans
recipe on page 131



Best of the Bakeshops

TEXT BY **Nina Elder**
RESEARCH BY **Andrew Knowlton**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **José Picayo**



BROWNIE-CHUNK COOKIES
The Sweet Pea Bakery & Catering/
Phoenix

The Sweet Pea Bakery & Catering PHOENIX

BROWNIE-CHUNK COOKIES

MAKES 18 TO 20/

Two favorite American desserts—cookies and brownies—join forces in this whimsical dessert. Owner Danielle Librera was inspired by similar cookies at Small World Coffee in Princeton, New Jersey.

- 2½ cups all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 cup (packed) golden brown sugar
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup walnuts, broken into ½-inch pieces
- ½ recipe (½ sheet) chilled Old-Fashioned Brownies (see recipe), cut into ½-inch cubes (generous 4 cups)
- Nonstick vegetable oil spray

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 2 large rimmed baking sheets with parchment. Whisk first 3 ingredients in medium bowl. Beat butter and both sugars in large bowl until smooth. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Stir in dry ingredients, then walnuts. Gently fold in brownie cubes (brownies may crumble).

Spray ¼- to ⅓-cup ice cream scoop with nonstick spray. Scoop batter; drop onto prepared sheets, spacing about 2 inches apart and spraying scoop with nonstick spray as needed. Using moist fingertips, flatten mounds to 1-inch thickness.

Bake cookies, 1 sheet at a time, until just golden, 18 to 20 minutes. Cool cookies on baking sheets.

OLD-FASHIONED BROWNIES

MAKES ONE 13X9-INCH BROWNIE SHEET OR TWELVE 3-INCH BARS/

You'll need only half of the brownies to make one batch of cookies. Wrap the leftovers tightly and freeze.

- 5 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, diced
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 large eggs
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup all purpose flour

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 13x9x2-inch metal baking pan with foil, leaving overhang. Stir chocolate and butter in heavy large saucepan over low heat until melted and smooth. Cool 15 minutes.

Whisk sugar and vanilla into chocolate mixture, then whisk in eggs and salt; stir in flour. Spread batter in prepared pan.

Bake brownies until tester inserted into center comes out with moist crumbs attached, about 20 minutes. Cool in pan. Cover and chill overnight.

Using foil as aid, lift brownie sheet from pan and cut in half or into twelve 3-inch bars.

Buttersweet Bakery ATLANTA

KEY LIME CUPCAKES

MAKES 12/

These vibrant green cupcakes match the chartreuse walls in this small Atlanta bakery. They also reflect the fun, laid-back vibe of the shop. "We call it retro funk," says owner Charlita Varner.

CUPCAKES

- 1 cup all purpose flour
- ¾ cup self-rising flour
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1¼ cups sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2½ tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 tablespoon finely grated lime peel
- ¼ teaspoon neon-green food coloring
- ¾ cup buttermilk

FROSTING

- 1 8-ounce package cream cheese, room temperature
- 1½ cups powdered sugar
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 tablespoon finely grated lime peel
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

CUPCAKES/ Preheat oven to 350°F. Line standard muffin pan with 12 paper liners. Whisk both flours in medium bowl. Beat butter in large bowl until smooth. Add sugar; beat to blend. Beat in eggs 1 at a time, then next 3 ingredients (batter may look curdled). Beat in flour mixture in 3 additions alternately with buttermilk in 2 additions. Spoon scant ⅓ cup batter into each liner.

Bake cupcakes until tester inserted into center comes out clean, 20 to 25 minutes. Cool 10 minutes. Remove from pan; cool.

FROSTING/ Beat all ingredients in medium bowl until smooth. Spread over cupcakes.

Sucré NEW ORLEANS

CAPPUCCINO ÉCLAIRS

MAKES ABOUT 12/

"My éclair is everything an éclair should be," says pastry chef Tariq Hanna. That might seem like a bold statement, but customers at his bakery snatch up the éclairs as soon as they hit the pastry case.

FILLING

- 2 cups water
- 1 cup finely ground full-flavored coffee beans (such as French roast)
- ½ vanilla bean, split lengthwise
- 1 tablespoon heavy whipping cream
- 5 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 large egg yolks
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, diced

ÉCLAIR DOUGH

- 1 cup water
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter, diced
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup bread flour
- 4 large eggs
- 4 ounces imported milk chocolate, melted
- Powdered sugar

FILLING/ Brew 2 cups water and coffee in standard coffeemaker. Pour 1 cup brewed coffee into heavy medium saucepan. Scrape in seeds from vanilla bean; add bean, then cream. Bring mixture to boil.

Whisk sugar and cornstarch in medium bowl, then whisk in yolks. Gradually whisk hot coffee mixture into yolk mixture. Return to same saucepan and cook until cream thickens and boils, whisking constantly, about 3 minutes. Add butter; whisk to melt. Transfer cream to small bowl. Press plastic wrap directly onto surface; chill until very cold, at least 3 hours and up to 2 days.

ÉCLAIR DOUGH/ Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 400°F. Line large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.





THIS PAGE
CHOCOLATE CAKE WITH FLEUR DE SEL CARAMEL FILLING
Vanilla Bake Shop/
Santa Monica, California
recipe on page 134

OPPOSITE
GRAPE PIE
Trois Pommes Patisserie/
Brooklyn
recipe on page 134

FOOD STYLING BY JEE LEVIN; PROP STYLING BY MOLLY FITZSIMONS

Bring 1 cup water, butter, and salt to boil in heavy medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add flour all at once; using wooden spoon, stir until dough forms ball and thick film coats pan bottom, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Using handheld electric mixer, beat in eggs, 1 at a time, beating until dough is smooth after each addition.

Spoon dough into pastry bag fitted with ½-inch plain round tip. Press dot of dough under each corner of parchment to anchor. Pipe 4-inch lines of dough onto paper, about 1½ inches apart. Bake 15 minutes (do not open oven). Reduce temperature to 350°F; bake until crisp, about 20 minutes. Cool shells on sheet.

Using serrated knife and starting at 1 long side, cut each shell in half. Fill shell bottom with 2 tablespoons filling; cover with top. Spread with melted chocolate.

Arrange éclairs on platter. Dust lightly with powdered sugar and serve.

Trois Pommes Patisserie BROOKLYN

GRAPE PIE WITH LEMON VERBENA ICE CREAM

8 SERVINGS/

The local farmers' market, which has Concord grapes and lemon verbena at the same time, inspired owner Emily Isaac to create this combo. The not-too-sweet pie is great for dessert, but also try skipping the ice cream and serving warm slices of the pie with a cheese course. Because Concord grapes aren't widely available, we used seedless red grapes instead.

CRUST

- 2 cups all purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon (generous) salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) chilled unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 3 tablespoons (about) ice water

FILLING

- 8 cups stemmed seedless red grapes (about 2½ pounds; preferably organic), rinsed well, patted dry
- 1 cup sugar
- ⅓ cup cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons frozen grape juice concentrate (made with Concord grapes), thawed
- Nonstick vegetable oil spray
- 1 large egg, beaten to blend (for glaze)
- Raw sugar*
- Lemon Verbena Ice Cream (see recipe)

CRUST/ Blend flour and salt in processor 5 seconds. Add butter. Using on/off turns, blend until most of butter is cut into ¼-inch pieces (mixture will resemble coarse meal). Add 2½ tablespoons ice water. Using on/off turns, blend until moist clumps form, adding more water by teaspoonfuls if dry. Gather dough into ball. Divide in half; shape each half into disk. Wrap; chill at least 1 hour.

FILLING/ Place half of grapes in processor; using on/off turns, chop into ⅓- to ½-inch pieces. Transfer to large sieve set over large bowl. Repeat with remaining grapes. Drain off and discard 1½ cups grape liquid.

Whisk 1 cup sugar and cornstarch in another large bowl to blend. Mix in drained grapes and grape juice concentrate.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray 9-inch pie dish with nonstick spray. Roll out 1 dough disk on floured surface to 13-inch round; transfer to dish. Brush dough edge with egg glaze. Fill with grape mixture. Roll out second dough disk to 12-inch round. Top pie with dough; trim overhang to ½ inch. Roll edge under; crimp. Brush top of pie with glaze; sprinkle with raw sugar. Cut several slits in top crust to allow steam to escape.

Bake pie until golden and juices bubble thickly, 60 to 70 minutes. Cool at least 30 minutes. Serve warm with ice cream.

*/ Also called turbinado or demerara sugar; available at most supermarkets and at natural foods stores.

LEMON VERBENA ICE CREAM

MAKES ABOUT 2½ CUPS/

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup whole milk
- ½ cup sugar, divided
- ¼ cup fresh lemon verbena leaves
- 7 large egg yolks

Bring cream, milk, ¼ cup sugar, and lemon verbena just to boil in medium saucepan, stirring until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat; cover and let steep 2 hours.

Whisk yolks and ¼ cup sugar in medium bowl. Return cream mixture to boil. Strain hot cream mixture; gradually whisk into yolk mixture. Return custard to same saucepan. Stir over medium-low heat until custard is thick enough to leave path on spoon when finger is drawn across and thermometer registers 180°F, 3 to 4 minutes (do not boil). Immediately transfer custard to medium bowl. Chill until cold, at least 2 hours.

Process custard in ice cream maker according to manufacturer's instructions. Transfer to bowl. Cover; freeze up to 3 days.

INGREDIENT TIP/ Lemon verbena, an herb with a lemon-like flavor, is sold at nurseries and at some farmers' markets.

Vanilla Bake Shop
SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA

CHOCOLATE CAKE WITH FLEUR DE SEL CARAMEL FILLING*

12 SERVINGS/

There's chocolate cake—and then there's *this* chocolate cake. Four layers of cake. Chocolate ganache. Salted caramel. Toasted almonds. It's a decadent combination that has become a big seller at this Santa Monica bakery—and a new favorite for weddings.

CARAMEL FILLING

- 1 cup sugar
- ¼ cup water
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, diced
- ¼ cup crème fraîche or sour cream
- ½ teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- Large pinch of fine fleur de sel* plus additional for assembly

GANACHE FILLING AND FROSTING

- 1½ pounds bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- 3 cups heavy whipping cream

CAKE

- 2 cups sugar
- 1¾ cups all purpose flour
- ¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup whole milk
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup hot water
- 1 tablespoon instant espresso powder or instant coffee
- 1¼ cups almonds, toasted, coarsely chopped

*COVER RECIPE

CARAMEL FILLING/ Stir sugar, ¼ cup water, and corn syrup in deep medium saucepan over low heat until sugar dissolves. Increase heat to medium; cover pan and cook 4 minutes. Uncover; increase heat to high. Boil without stirring until syrup is deep amber, occasionally brushing down pan sides with wet pastry brush, about 6 minutes. Remove from heat. Add cream (mixture will bubble). Whisk in butter, then crème fraîche, lemon juice, and pinch of fleur de sel. Cool completely. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 3 days ahead. Cover and chill. Bring to room temperature before using.

GANACHE FILLING AND FROSTING/ Place chocolate in large bowl. Bring cream to simmer in medium saucepan. Pour cream over chocolate; let soften 1 minute. Whisk until chocolate is smooth. Cool, then cover and chill overnight. **DO AHEAD** Ganache can be made 3 days ahead. Keep chilled. Bring to room temperature before using.

CAKE/ Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 350°F. Butter two 9-inch-diameter cake pans with 2-inch-high sides. Line bottom of each with parchment paper; butter paper and dust pan with flour.

Sift sugar, flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, and salt into large bowl. Add milk, eggs, and melted butter. Using electric mixer, beat at low speed until blended. Increase speed and beat 2 minutes. Stir 1 cup hot water and espresso powder in small bowl to dissolve. Add to batter; beat until blended (batter will be thin). Divide batter between pans (about 3 cups each).

Bake cakes until tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 32 minutes. Cool cakes in pans on racks 10 minutes. Cut around cakes; turn out onto racks. Peel off parchment and cool completely.

Using long serrated knife, cut each cake horizontally in half. Place 1 layer on platter; spread with ½ cup room-temperature ganache. Spoon ¾ cup ganache into pastry bag fitted with ¼-inch plain round tip. Pipe ring of ganache around edge of layer. Spread ¼ cup room-temperature caramel filling evenly inside ring. Sprinkle caramel with large pinch of fleur de sel, then 1 tablespoon almonds. Top with second cake layer, ganache, ganache ring, caramel filling, fleur de sel, and almonds. Repeat with third cake layer. Top with fourth cake layer, cut side down. Spread remaining ganache over top and sides of cake. Press remaining almonds onto sides. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 days ahead. Cover with cake dome and chill. Let cake stand at room temperature 1 hour.

*/ A type of sea salt; available at some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores.

Sugar Rush

MORE BOUTIQUE BAKERIES WE LOVE

Two Fat Cats/ PORTLAND, MAINE
This homey little shop, which is named for co-owner and baker Kristen DuShane's not-so-svelte pets, is known for its all-American treats. Locals stop by for pies, cakes, and the traditional New England treat known as the whoopie pie (two small chocolate cakes sandwiched together with marshmallow cream). *207-347-5144; www.twofatcatsbakery.com*

Birdbath, Neighborhood Green Bakery/ NEW YORK
Owner Maury Rubin (the guy behind The City Bakery) wanted to create a green bakery, so he created a shop with walls made of wheat and shelves made from recycled paper. The treats continue the theme. Try a (Save the Polar) Bear Claw or a "What's Your Carbon Footprint?" cookie. *646-722-6570 (West Village), 646-722-6565 (East Village); buildagreenbakery.com*

Sugar Bakeshop/ CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA
This sweet little downtown bakery was founded by Bill Bowick and David Bouffard, two architects who moved from New York to Charleston. The couple transformed what was once Old Whaley's Vegetable Stand into a cream-and-blue-green pastry showcase, and Bowick started turning out crowd-pleasing treats, like chocolate chip cookies and iced-to-order red velvet cupcakes. *843-579-2891; sugarbake.com*

Tart Bakery Boutique and Studio/ DALLAS
Sisters Kristen Rahal Massad (a pastry chef) and Stephanie Weibring (a graphic designer) opened this shop in 2004. Today, they have two locations (one in Dallas, another in Plano) where they make cakes, pies, and a huge variety of miniature treats—from banana cream tartlets and cream puffs to cheesecake bites and cannoli. *469-335-8919 (Dallas), 972-673-0446 (Plano); tartbakerydallas.com*

Sugar Bakery + Cafe/ SEATTLE
One autumn, the apple tree in Stephanie Crocker and John McCaig's backyard was loaded down with fruit, which the couple turned into pies, applesauce, and caramel-apple tartlets. This baking extravaganza inspired Stephanie to change her career from Web designer to baker. These days, you can stop by their brick-and-mortar store and pick up cakes, brioche, cookies—and, of course, caramel-apple tartlets. *206-749-4105; sugarbakerycafe.com*

Bakesale Betty
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

BANANA BREAD WITH CINNAMON CRUMBLE TOPPING

MAKES 1 LOAF/

"I like banana bread, but I always thought it needed a little something more," says owner Alison Barakat. So she added honey and cinnamon to the batter and topped it with a cinnamon-brown sugar crumble. "It's a cross between banana bread and coffee cake," she says.

- 1½ cups all purpose flour
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon, divided
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup mashed ripe bananas (2 to 3 medium)
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ cup water
- 2½ tablespoons (packed) golden brown sugar

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter and flour 9x5x3-inch metal baking pan. Whisk 1½ cups flour, 1 cup sugar, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, baking soda, and salt in medium bowl. Whisk next 5 ingredients in large bowl until smooth. Add dry ingredients; stir to blend. Transfer batter to pan. Mix 2 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, and brown sugar; sprinkle over batter.

Bake bread until tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 1 hour. Cool bread in pan 30 minutes. Turn pan on its side; slide out bread, being careful not to dislodge topping. Turn bread right side up and cool completely. /■

SEE MORE GREAT RESTAURANT DESSERTS AT *bonappetit.com/go/slideshows.*

Women Chefs:

The Next Generation

THESE SIX CHEFS ARE BREAKING GROUND AND TAKING CHARGE. WE GATHERED THEM AROUND THE TABLE TO TALK ABOUT "FEMININE" FOOD, THEIR FAVORITE EATS, AND THE VALUE OF HAZING. READ ON FOR THEIR STORIES—AND SIGNATURE RECIPES.



Melissa Perello

BACKGROUND
Executive chef (at age 24) at Michael Mina's Charles Nob Hill in San Francisco; later, head chef at Fifth Floor in San Francisco

CURRENT GIG
The more casual Frances, which is set to open in San Francisco next year

Kelly Liken

BACKGROUND
CIA grad (first in her class) with an externship at The Inn at Little Washington in Virginia

CURRENT GIG
The seasonally focused Kelly Liken restaurant in Vail, Colorado

Naomi Pomeroy

BACKGROUND
Founder and chef of Gotham Tavern and co-founder and chef of the underground supper club Family Supper in Portland, Oregon

CURRENT GIG
Beast, a 24-seater in Portland



TEXT BY **Camille Hahn**
INTERVIEW BY **Evan Kleiman**
RESEARCH BY **Andrew Knowlton**
PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Jill Greenberg**

Allison Vines-Rushing

BACKGROUND
James Beard Award winner and Alain Ducasse alum

CURRENT GIG
The modern-southern MiLa in New Orleans and the fried-chicken joint Dirty Bird To-Go in New York

Alexandra Raij

BACKGROUND
Executive chef of the Spanish-themed Tía Pol and El Quinto Pino in New York

CURRENT GIG
In the planning stages of a new restaurant

Ashley Christensen

BACKGROUND
Self-taught; worked seven years as executive chef of wine-centric Enoteca Vin in Raleigh, North Carolina

CURRENT GIG
The ’40s-era Poole’s Downtown Diner in Raleigh

THE CONVERSATION

Thirty years ago,

chefs like Alice Waters and Lidia Bastianich—groundbreaking women who owned their own restaurants and won fame for it—were the exception. But no longer. Their efforts paved the way for some of our current favorite chefs: women like Melissa Perello (MP), Kelly Liken (KL), Naomi Pomeroy (NP), Allison Vines-Rushing (AVR), Alexandra Raij (AR), and Ashley Christensen (AC). Here, they talk with pioneering chef Evan Kleiman (EK), owner of L.A.'s Angeli Caffè, about what it means to be a woman chef today.

EK: A couple of you use the word "feminine" when describing your food. Is there a difference in the way men and women cook?

NP: Isn't there some scientific evidence that women have a slightly more honed palate? I don't manipulate as much as I think a lot of men chefs tend to do. If you're spending the time to go to the farmers' market and select the best head of radicchio you can find, then you really don't have to do too much to it.

MP: Yeah, absolutely. It feels like women's focus is more about just really letting the true ingredients shine for themselves.

AR: I don't know if it's feminine or maybe it's because I'm a middle child, but I don't want to have what everybody else has, and I don't want to have the same vegetables everyone else has. I actually get seeds and get people to grow them for me. I think that's kind of girlish.

NP: You don't want to be wearing the same dress as someone else at the party.

AR: Exactly.

AVR: The first time somebody called my food feminine, it was Alain Ducasse. He came to our restaurant to eat, and we were flipping out. My husband was with me. We hand-delivered every course, and he was like, "I like your food—it's very feminine."

EK: Were you insulted?

AVR: I wasn't. My husband was, a little. But then our French waiter explained, "Feminine is sexy." That's really how I look at it. It's hot.

AR: There is a sensuality. I feel like I touch food more than a lot of other people. I don't have a lot of tasting spoons in my pocket. I put my finger in it and I touch it and taste it, and I taste it over and over and over again.

EK: Restaurant kitchens are infamous for their hazing. How were you treated as a woman in that environment?

AVR: In New York, at Ducasse, I was the only girl some of the time with 17 men—French men—and they just pushed me to the limit every day. They put more and more on my station, and they'd just wait to see if I would crack. And sometimes I did. Sometimes I cracked. Sometimes I cried or hit somebody. But really, I'm so glad they did. And I look back at it now and I know not everybody was pushed like I was, and I think I've come a long way because of it.

KL: I would publicly like to thank every person who made me work harder, who pushed me—unfairly, I thought at the time—who made me cry, who put too much stuff on my station, who took bets on whether I was going to burn the nuts. Because today, I am so much better off. I can look at myself and see that I am a markedly better technician than the people I was standing next to ten years ago.

EK: Were your parents horrified that you chose to do something very physical? My mother, when I first opened my restaurant, would sit at a table where she could look at me in the kitchen. And she sat there and cried.

NP: My mom looks at my arms and she says, "Oh my God," and I have to call my dad when I burn myself really badly and say, "I'm really sorry, Dad." 'Cause they worry.

EK: What's your favorite food—the dish that, above all others, really knocks your socks off?

AC: One of my favorite dishes comes from Lupa in New York. It's this pork shin that's brined, and then it's braised and the bone's removed, and it's tied, and it's deep-fried. The outside is the equivalent of a pork crackling and the inside is very similar to barbecue. Texturally and theoretically, it hits on all these levels.

MP: Zuni in San Francisco has this roasted chicken salad. It's so simple, but it's so freakin' good. It's roasted in a wood oven so it's got that beautiful smoky flavor, and Judy Rodgers does it with frisée usually, and she makes the vinaigrette with the chicken fat—with schmaltz. That's my favorite thing. I have to say, I've ripped it off a couple of times.

EK: So tell us about your own food. What can we expect when we eat at your restaurants (or cook these recipes)?

NP: It's just two small women chefs in the kitchen. And I like the fact that we're cooking meat, which seems like a manly thing to do. We don't actually serve big portions of meat, though. At a restaurant called Beast, it's important to have a lot of protein happening.

AR: I offer food that, on the surface, is approachable and classic, but when you taste it—at least in my view—it has something really unexpected and really personal.

"I WOULD *LIKE TO THANK* EVERY PERSON WHO PUSHED ME, WHO *MADE ME CRY.*" —KELLY LIKEN

LISTEN TO A PODCAST WITH THE CHEFS FEATURED IN THIS STORY AT *bonappetit.com/go/podcasts.*

OPENING SPREAD: FASHION STYLIST, ADRIANA VERWEY; HAIR AND MAKEUP BY LUCY CRAWFORD AND BARBARA FARMAN AT CLOUTIER AND GAREN TOLKIN AT EAMGMT.

PORK, PRUNE, AND
GREEN PEPPERCORN PÂTÉ



Naomi Pomeroy
BEAST / Portland, OR

PORK, PRUNE, AND GREEN PEPPERCORN PÂTÉ

20 SERVINGS/

Naomi Pomeroy is bringing back pâté. To allow the prunes to soak and the pâté to set, you'll need to begin this at least two days ahead. But the dish is worth the wait: Intensely flavored and super-impressive, this is the perfect party appetizer.

- ⅓ cup (packed) pitted prunes
- ¼ cup plus 1½ tablespoons Armagnac or other brandy
- 1¾ pounds pork shoulder (Boston butt), cut into ¾-inch cubes, chilled
- 7 ounces pork fat, cut into ½-inch cubes, chilled
- 1 1-pound package thinly sliced bacon
- ½ cup crème fraîche*
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon minced shallot
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- 1½ teaspoons minced fresh marjoram
- ¾ teaspoon coarsely chopped drained green peppercorns from jar
- ½ cup minced applewood-smoked bacon (about 6 ounces)
- 5½ teaspoons coarse kosher salt
- 1¼ teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
- Assorted mustards, chutneys, cornichons,* and capers

Place prunes and ¼ cup Armagnac in small bowl. Cover and let soak overnight.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Using meat grinder with medium disk, grind pork shoulder and fat together according to manufacturer's instructions into large bowl. Line 9x5x3-inch metal loaf pan with sliced bacon, overlapping slightly and leaving 3-inch overhang on all sides. Set aside.

Drain prunes, discarding liquid. Chop prunes. Whisk crème fraîche and egg in medium bowl. Stir in next 4 ingredients, 1½ tablespoons Armagnac, and chopped prunes.

Mix pork, minced bacon, 5½ teaspoons coarse salt and 1¼ teaspoons ground pepper in large bowl. Add prune mixture; using hands, mix gently until well incorporated.

Transfer pâté mixture to prepared loaf pan, pressing evenly into pan. Fold overhanging bacon over to cover, pressing to secure. Cover pan tightly with foil. Place loaf pan in large roasting pan. Add enough boiling water to roasting pan to come halfway up sides of loaf pan. Cover roasting pan with foil, sealing at edges. Transfer to oven. Bake pâté until instant-read thermometer inserted into center registers 150°F, about 1 hour 30 minutes.

Remove loaf pan from roasting pan; carefully discard water in roasting pan. Return covered pâté to roasting pan. Fill roasting pan with ice water; let pâté cool 30 minutes. Transfer pâté to refrigerator. Chill at least 24 hours. **DO AHEAD** Pâté can be made 1 week ahead. Keep covered and refrigerated.

Fill large roasting pan halfway with boiling water. Place pâté in loaf pan in water 30 seconds. Remove foil; run knife around edges of pan. Invert pâté onto plate, discarding melted fat from edges of pâté. Chill 1 hour.

Thinly slice pâté. Serve with assorted mustards, chutneys, cornichons, and capers.

*/ Available at some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores.

FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Lendon Flanagan**

PAN-SEARED DUCK BREAST
WITH DUCK CONFIT AND
COLLARD-STUFFED CREPES



Kelly Liken
KELLY LIKEN RESTAURANT / Vail



PAN-SEARED DUCK BREAST WITH DUCK CONFIT AND COLLARD-STUFFED CREPES

6 SERVINGS/

In this clever dish, Kelly Liken makes use of the entire duck—not a bit is wasted. The carcass flavors the sauce, the legs are confited and spooned into crepes, and the breasts get a quick pan-sear. Ask your butcher to cut up the ducks for you.

CONFIT

- 3 5-pound ducks, leg-thigh pieces and breasts cut from carcasses, wings cut from breasts, carcasses reserved
- ¼ cup herbes de Provence*
- 1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¾ teaspoon ground white pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons minced peeled fresh ginger
- 4 7-ounce containers rendered duck fat**

SAUCE

- 2 cups chopped onions
- 2 cups chopped carrots
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1 small bunch Italian parsley
- 4 large sprigs fresh thyme
- 3 bay leaves
- ½ teaspoon whole black peppercorns
- 16 cups low-salt chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons honey

CREPES

- 1½ cups whole milk
- ¾ cup cornmeal
- ¾ cup all purpose flour
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon melted butter plus additional for brushing
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 2 bacon slices, chopped
- 1¼ cups chopped onions
- 1 12- to 13-ounce bunch collard greens, tough stems removed, leaves coarsely chopped (about 6 cups)
- 2 cups low-salt chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 4 cups assorted herb sprigs (such as parsley, dill, mint, and chopped chives)
- Extra-virgin olive oil

CONFIT/ Place duck leg-thigh pieces in 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Cover and chill duck breasts, carcasses, and wings.

Whisk herbes de Provence and next 3 ingredients in small bowl. Mix in garlic and ginger. Rub mixture over duck leg-thigh pieces. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover and chill overnight.

Preheat oven to 275°F. Rub excess spice mixture from duck leg-thigh pieces; return duck to dish. Melt duck fat in medium saucepan over medium heat. Pour duck fat over legs. Cover dish tightly with foil. Roast duck until meat is falling from bones, about 6 hours. Cool.

Pull meat off bones in bite-size pieces; discard skin and bones. Place meat in medium bowl. Strain duck fat into bowl with duck meat, completely submerging meat. Cover and refrigerate. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 days ahead. Keep chilled.

SAUCE/ Working in batches, brown duck carcasses and wings in large pot over high heat, about 13 minutes per batch. Pour off all but 3 tablespoons fat from pot. Add onions, carrots, and celery to pot and sauté until browned, about 10 minutes, stirring often. Add parsley, thyme, bay leaves, and

peppercorns; stir to coat. Add chicken broth, carcasses, and wings; bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer 4 hours, occasionally spooning fat from surface of pot. Pour stock through fine-mesh strainer into large bowl. Chill overnight.

Spoon fat from top of stock. Return stock to saucepan and boil until reduced to 2 cups, about 1 hour. Strain again. Stir in honey. Season sauce with pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 days ahead. Cover and chill. Rewarm before serving.

CREPES/ Puree whole milk, cornmeal, flour, eggs, 1 tablespoon melted butter, and ¾ teaspoon salt in blender until smooth. Cover and chill crepe batter at least 2 hours and up to 24 hours.

Cook bacon in large pot over medium heat until most of fat is rendered and bacon is browned. Add onions and sauté until onions are soft, about 5 minutes. Add collard greens and cook until wilted, stirring occasionally, 3 to 4 minutes. Add chicken broth and increase heat to high. Bring to boil; reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until greens are tender, about 1 hour. Uncover and boil until liquid evaporates, about 15 minutes. Set aside.

Heat 10-inch-diameter skillet with 7-inch-diameter bottom over medium-high heat. Brush skillet with melted butter. Pour scant ¼ cup batter into skillet; swirl to cover bottom with batter. Cook until crepe looks dry around edges, about 1 minute. Flip over and cook just to set center, 10 to 15 seconds. Transfer crepe to plate. Repeat with remaining batter, making 12 crepes. Stack crepes between parchment paper or paper towels to prevent sticking.

Line large baking sheet with parchment paper. Rewarm duck confit in medium saucepan; strain. Working with 1 crepe at a time, spoon 1 heaping tablespoon duck confit and 1 heaping tablespoon collard greens onto top quarter of crepe. Fold crepe in half over filling, then in half again, forming triangle. Transfer to prepared sheet. Repeat with remaining crepes, duck confit, and collard greens. Brush tops of crepes with melted butter. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature.

Preheat oven to 250°F. Using sharp knife, score skin of duck breasts diagonally to create 1-inch diamond pattern. Sprinkle all over with salt and pepper. Heat 2 heavy large skillets over medium-high heat. Add 3 duck breasts to each skillet, skin side down. Cook until fat is rendered and skin is brown and crisp, about 7 minutes. Turn and cook duck breasts to desired doneness, about 4 minutes for medium-rare. Transfer to work surface and brush skin with honey. Let duck breasts rest 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, place crepes in oven until heated through, about 10 minutes. Rewarm sauce. Mix herbs in medium bowl. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Drizzle lightly with oil; toss to coat.

Cut duck breasts crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices. Place 2 warm crepes on each plate. Fan out 1 sliced duck breast on each plate. Drizzle sauce over. Garnish with herb salad and serve.

*/ A dried herb mixture; sold in the spice section of supermarkets and at specialty foods stores. If unavailable, a combination of dried thyme, basil, savory, and fennel seeds can be substituted.

**/ Rendered duck fat can be found in the freezer section of some supermarkets, at specialty foods stores, and online at dartagnan.com or gourmetfoodstore.com.

Allison Vines-Rushing
MILA / New Orleans



GRILLED FISH WITH CRAB-STUFFED ZUCCHINI BLOSSOMS AND WHITE WINE SAUCE

4 SERVINGS/

This light and lovely dish epitomizes the kind of southern-influenced French cooking Allison Vines-Rushing does so well at MiLa. She uses lemonfish, a great meaty sport fish from the Gulf Coast, but mahi-mahi is a fine substitute.

SAUCE

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 large shallots, thinly sliced (about 1 cup)
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 3 fresh thyme sprigs
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 cups dry white wine
- 1 cup water

VEGETABLES

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 8 baby squash (such as zucchini or pattypan), zucchini halved lengthwise, pattypan halved horizontally
- 2 large fresh thyme sprigs, divided
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 4 cipolline onions or 8 pearl onions, peeled
- 2 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 cup low-salt chicken broth

ZUCCHINI BLOSSOMS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoons chopped shallot
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 8 ounces cooked crabmeat, picked over
- 4 large fresh tarragon leaves, thinly sliced
- 4 large or 8 medium fresh zucchini blossoms
- 4 to 8 long fresh chives

FISH

- 8 3-ounce lemonfish (cobia) or mahi-mahi fillets
- Olive oil
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) chilled butter, cut into ½-inch cubes

SAUCE/ Heat olive oil in heavy medium saucepan over medium heat. Add sliced shallots, sliced garlic, thyme sprigs, and bay leaf; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook until shallots are beginning to soften, stirring often, about 2 minutes. Add white wine, increase heat, and boil until mixture is reduced to 1¼ cups, about 15 minutes. Add 1 cup water and boil until mixture measures scant 1 cup, about 13 minutes. Strain into small bowl, pressing on solids; discard solids in strainer. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.

VEGETABLES/ Heat olive oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Sprinkle baby squash with salt and pepper. Place 1 thyme sprig and squash, cut side down, in skillet and cook until squash is tender and brown, about 2 minutes. Transfer squash to medium bowl and discard thyme sprig. Melt butter in same skillet. Add cipolline onions and smashed garlic cloves; cook until onions are browned on both sides, about 2 minutes per side. Add chicken broth and remaining thyme sprig; simmer until onions are tender, about 8 minutes. Strain, discarding liquid, thyme sprig, and garlic cloves. Add onions to bowl with squash. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 hours ahead. Let vegetables stand at room temperature.

ZUCCHINI BLOSSOMS/ Heat oil in heavy small saucepan over medium heat. Add shallot and garlic; sauté until soft, about

GRILLED FISH WITH CRAB-STUFFED ZUCCHINI BLOSSOMS AND WHITE WINE SAUCE



2 minutes. Transfer to medium bowl. Add crab and tarragon to bowl; stir to coat evenly. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Gently open zucchini blossoms and remove stamens. Divide crab mixture among blossoms; twist tops to seal. Tie tops with chives. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 hour ahead. Cover and chill.

FISH/ Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat). Sprinkle fish fillets with salt and pepper; brush with olive oil. Grill until slightly charred and just opaque in center, about 3 minutes per side. Let rest while finishing sauce.

Bring sauce just to simmer in large skillet over medium-low heat. Gradually whisk in chilled butter. Season sauce with salt and pepper. Place squash and zucchini blossoms in sauce; turn to coat. Cook very gently over low heat just until vegetables are heated through, about 3 minutes.

Divide squash, onions, and blossoms among plates. Place 2 fillets on each plate. Drizzle any remaining sauce over fish and vegetables; serve.

Ashley Christensen
POOLE'S DOWNTOWN DINER / Raleigh



SNEADS FERRY CLAMS WITH LATE SUMMER SQUASH, PISTOU, AND MARINATED GRAPE TOMATOES

4 SERVINGS/

Ashley Christensen prepares this popular dish with local seafood (from the coastal town of Sneads Ferry) and vegetables from nearby farmers' markets. Delicious on their own, the clams can also be served over hot pasta. *Pistou* is France's pesto. You will have some left over. Spread it on grilled bread slices or toss it with roasted veggies.

- 1½ cups olive oil, divided, plus 2 tablespoons
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled, smashed, divided
- 1 cup (packed) fresh basil leaves
- 2 teaspoons fine sea salt
- 1½ cups grape tomatoes (about 8 ounces), halved lengthwise
- 1 large shallot, chopped (about ¼ cup)
- 32 littleneck clams, scrubbed
- 2 cups dry white wine
- 1 pound mixed summer squash (such as pattypan, crookneck, and zucchini), cut into ⅓-inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 1½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- Toasted baguette slices

Puree 1 cup olive oil and 2 garlic cloves in blender. Add basil and 2 teaspoons sea salt; puree until basil is finely chopped. Transfer pistou to bowl. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 3 days ahead. Cover and chill.

Place grape tomatoes in medium bowl. Sprinkle with salt, stir, then let stand 10 minutes. Stir in ½ cup olive oil. Season tomatoes to taste with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature.

Heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Add shallot and remaining 2 garlic cloves. Sauté until shallot and garlic begin to brown, about 2 minutes. Add clams; stir to coat. Add wine, increase heat to high, cover, and cook until clams open, about 8 minutes. Using tongs, divide clams among large bowls (discard any clams that do not open).

Add summer squash to broth in pot. Cook until tender, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Whisk in ¼ cup pistou, butter, and lemon juice. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper. Pour sauce and squash over clams in bowls. Spoon tomatoes over and drizzle with oil from tomatoes. Serve with toasted baguette slices.

SNEADS FERRY CLAMS WITH LATE SUMMER SQUASH, PISTOU, AND MARINATED GRAPE TOMATOES



SALMOREJO CORDOBÉS



Alexandra Raij
New York



SALMOREJO CORDOBÉS*

8 SERVINGS/

Instead of the usual gazpacho, Alexandra Raij makes a thicker (thanks to much more bread) *salmorejo.* This style of cold soup originated in the city of Córdoba in the south of Spain. Raij developed her version when she worked at El Quinto Pino, a table-free tapas bar in New York. When preparing this dish, you'll want to use two kinds of olive oil: A lightly flavored oil is pureed into the soup, but a stronger, fruitier Spanish oil gets drizzled over just before serving, for a flavorful accent.

- 2 cups room-temperature water
- 1 tablespoon coarse kosher salt
- 2 cups (packed) coarsely torn day-old baguette with crust (about 4 ounces)
- 10 plum tomatoes, halved, seeded, coarsely chopped (about 6 cups)
- ⅓ cup coarsely chopped onion
- ¼ cup Sherry wine vinegar
- 1½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, peeled
- 1½ cups lightly flavored extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 hard-boiled eggs, coarsely chopped
- ⅓ cup chopped Serrano ham* (about 1½ ounces)
- Fruity Spanish olive oil (for drizzling)

Stir 2 cups water and 1 tablespoon coarse salt in medium bowl to dissolve. Add bread; soak 30 minutes. Squeeze excess liquid from bread; reserve soaking liquid.

Puree half each of chopped tomatoes, chopped onion, Sherry wine vinegar, fresh lemon juice, and garlic in blender until very smooth. With machine running, gradually add half of bread, adding reserved soaking liquid by tablespoonfuls if mixture is too thick to blend. Puree until very smooth. With machine running, gradually add half of light extra-virgin olive oil (mixture will turn slightly orange). Transfer to large bowl. Repeat with remaining chopped tomatoes, chopped onion, Sherry wine vinegar, fresh lemon juice, garlic, bread, and oil. Cover and chill at least 2 hours and up to 1 day. Season to taste with salt.

Divide soup among small bowls. Sprinkle chopped egg and ham over. Drizzle with Spanish olive oil and serve.

*/ An uncooked, cured Spanish ham (also called *jamón Serrano*); sold at specialty foods stores and Spanish and Latin markets. If unavailable, prosciutto can be substituted.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

*COVER RECIPE



Melissa Perello
San Francisco



SALT COD BEIGNETS WITH HERBED YOGURT

MAKES ABOUT 30/

Melissa Perello shows her Cal-Mediterranean influence with these addictive fried treats. The salt cod needs to soak overnight, so start one day ahead.

BEIGNETS

- ¾ cup ⅓-inch cubes dried salt cod*
- 8 cups water
- 1¾ cups whole milk
- 2 large garlic cloves, peeled, crushed
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- ½ cup minced onion
- ¼ cup canned evaporated milk
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon active dry yeast
- 1 large egg, beaten to blend
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 1¾ cups cake flour
- 2 tablespoons minced chives
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon peel
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon crushed fennel seed
- ⅛ teaspoon ground white pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper

HERBED YOGURT

- 2 7-ounce containers whole-milk Greek-style yogurt**
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons each minced fresh dill, tarragon, parsley, and mint
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon peel
- Vegetable oil (for frying)

BEIGNETS/ Place cod in large bowl. Cover with 8 cups water. Soak overnight.

Drain cod. Rinse well; drain. Transfer to medium saucepan. Add next 3 ingredients. Bring to simmer. Reduce heat to low and gently poach fish 20 minutes. Drain. Reserve poaching liquid; discard bay leaf. Place fish and garlic on plate; using fork, finely mash.

Heat oil in small skillet over medium-low heat. Add onion and sauté until translucent, about 5 minutes. Set aside.

Heat scant ½ cup reserved fish poaching liquid, evaporated milk, and sugar in small saucepan just to 105°F. Transfer to bowl; sprinkle yeast over. Let stand until spongy, about 15 minutes. Stir in egg and butter.

Whisk next 7 ingredients in large bowl. Stir in yeast mixture, then cod mixture and onion; stir until blended, about 1 minute.

Butter medium bowl. Transfer beignet batter to bowl; cover with plastic wrap. Let stand at room temperature 1 hour (batter will rise slightly). **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Refrigerate. Let stand at room temperature 1 hour before continuing.

HERBED YOGURT/ Mix all ingredients except oil in medium bowl. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cover and chill.

Pour enough oil into heavy large saucepan to measure depth of 1½ inches. Attach deep-fry thermometer to side of pan. Heat oil to 315°F to 325°F. Working in batches, scoop beignet batter by tablespoonfuls into hot oil. Fry until golden, turning occasionally, about 5 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer to paper towels to drain. Serve with herbed yogurt.

*/ Available at some supermarkets and at Italian markets as *baccalà* and at Spanish markets as *bacalao*.

**/ A thick yogurt; sold at some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores. /■

FOOD STYLING BY HEIDI JOHANNSEN; PROP STYLING BY SARA WACKSMAN





BEFORE THE DINNER RUSH The staff of Pittsburgh's Mio Kitchen & Wine Bar fuels up behind the restaurant. Tonight's crew includes (left to right) line cooks Tylor Dinteman and Jason Watts, server Cara Moody, maître d' Alec Chipman, bar manager Holly Schrecengost, chef-owner Matthew Porco, and sous-chef Ephraim Hill.



The First Seating

TEXT BY **Nina Elder**
RESEARCH BY **Andrew Knowlton**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Cedric Angeles**

BEFORE YOU GET TO THE RESTAURANT, CHEFS, LINE COOKS, AND SERVERS HAVE TO EAT, TOO. SO WHAT FUELS THE STAFF THROUGH HOURS OF SERVICE? WE WENT BEHIND THE KITCHEN DOORS TO GET THE DELICIOUS RECIPES CHEFS KEEP FOR THEMSELVES.

Before a single customer walks into a restaurant,

there's a lot to be done. Prep the food. Stock the bar. Set the tables. Eat. At most restaurants (and at all ten listed here), that pre-service meal is called *family meal*. Why? Because the intense pressure of the restaurant world turns coworkers into family.

Much like an actual family does, the employees sit down, eat, and catch up over dinner. And the food on the table is often as casual as the conversation. It's good, hearty fare (think meatloaf, pot pie, mac and cheese) that will keep everyone going until that last diner heads off into the night.

"At family meal, there's no hierarchy," says Seattle chef Tom Douglas of Dahlia Lounge. "You're breaking bread with your friends. For those 30 minutes, everyone is equal—and hungry."

Mio Kitchen & Wine Bar PITTSBURGH

Chef-owner Matthew Porco sees family meal as a good challenge for his cooks. "It's like being at home, opening the fridge, and figuring out what to make for dinner," he says. Depending on what's in the pantry and who's cooking, the staff can expect veal with rice, pasta with homemade meat sauce, or the employee favorite: macaroni and cheese spiked with a little pancetta.

MAC AND CHEESE WITH PANCETTA

10 SERVINGS/

- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter, divided
- 4 ounces thinly sliced pancetta (Italian bacon), coarsely chopped
- 1 cup finely chopped onion
- ¾ teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ¼ cup all purpose flour
- 3½ cups (or more) whole milk
- 2½ cups coarsely grated sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 8- to 8.8-ounce container mascarpone cheese*
- 1½ cups panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)**
- ½ cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 1 pound orecchiette (little ear-shaped pasta) or large elbow macaroni

Melt 1 tablespoon butter in large deep skillet over medium-high heat. Add pancetta; sauté until crisp, about 6 minutes. Add onion; sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Add crushed red pepper and garlic; stir 1 minute. Stir in 3 tablespoons butter; allow to melt, then add flour and stir 1 minute. Gradually whisk in 3½ cups milk; simmer until thick enough to coat spoon thickly, stirring frequently, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Whisk in cheeses. Whisk in more milk by ¼ cupfuls until sauce is thick but pourable. Season with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Chill uncovered until cool; cover and chill. Rewarm, stirring over medium heat.

Melt 4 tablespoons butter in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add panko and stir until very light golden, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in parsley. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly butter 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Cook pasta in large pot of boiling salted water until just tender but still firm to bite, stirring occasionally. Drain well. Return pasta to pot. Add warm cheese sauce; toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish. Sprinkle crumb mixture evenly over. Bake mac and cheese until heated through and topping is golden brown, about 30 minutes.

*/ An Italian cream cheese; sold at many supermarkets and at Italian markets.

**/ Available in the Asian foods section of some supermarkets and at Asian markets.

Restaurant Le Rêve SAN ANTONIO

Chef Andrew Weissman is serious about his family meal. "The quality is the same as what we'd serve to our guests," he says. To make sure that happens, Weissman chooses the family meal entrée, assigns a cook to prepare it, and then expects that cook to deliver—no matter how humble the dish. "Even meatloaf can be transporting," he says.

ANGUS MEATLOAF WITH CRUSHED YUKON GOLD POTATOES AND BIBB SALAD

8 SERVINGS/

- 2 pounds ground Angus beef
- 1 cup fresh breadcrumbs (from crustless French bread ground in processor)
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup coarsely grated onion
- ¾ cup finely grated peeled carrots
- ¾ cup ketchup, divided
- 6 tablespoons hoisin sauce,* divided
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon hot chili paste (such as sambal oelek)* or chili-garlic sauce*
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Crushed Yukon Gold Potatoes (see recipe)
- Bibb Salad (see recipe)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Gently mix beef, breadcrumbs, eggs, onion, carrots, ½ cup ketchup, 4 tablespoons hoisin, garlic, chili



MAC AND CHEESE WITH PANCETTA
Mio Kitchen & Wine Bar
Pittsburgh











THIS PAGE (clockwise from above): Family meal at Otto is served buffet-style in the kitchen./ Antonio Maldonado (left), the morning sous-chef at Otto, is known for his Chicken Parmesan (recipe on page 151). Co-worker Fabian Perez (right) digs into the dish, plus a tossed green salad./ Angus Meatloaf with Bibb Salad from Restaurant Le Rêve in San Antonio (recipe on page 146)./ Proof on Main sous-chef Cody Stone sits down to family meal in the restaurant's dining room./ Frank Bonanno, chef-owner of Mizuna, sometimes lends a hand with family meal. **OPPOSITE:** Lunch manager Stacey Goldberg (in black), servers Rachel Kirk (far left) and Sharon Bushman (middle), and porter Eric Colan take a break in the Otto kitchen./ At Proof on Main, the Bison Shepherd's Pie is topped with piped mashed potatoes (recipe on page 151).



"*FAMILY MEAL* IS OUR VERSION OF THE WATERCOOLER—BUT WITH BETTER FOOD."
—CHEF TOM DOUGLAS, DAHLIA LOUNGE, SEATTLE



paste, salt, and pepper in large bowl just until combined. Press into 9x5x3-inch metal loaf pan. Roast meatloaf until instant-read thermometer inserted into center registers 160°F, about 1 hour 15 minutes.

Mix remaining ¼ cup ketchup and 2 tablespoons hoisin sauce in small bowl; spread over top of meatloaf and roast 15 minutes longer. Turn meatloaf out of pan onto side; then turn sauce side up. Cut meatloaf crosswise into ¾-inch-thick slices. Serve with crushed potatoes and Bibb salad.

*/ Available in the Asian foods section of many supermarkets and at Asian markets.

CRUSHED YUKON GOLD POTATOES

8 SERVINGS/

- 3 pounds unpeeled medium Yukon Gold potatoes
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) butter, cut into ½-inch cubes, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons white or black truffle oil* (optional)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Rub potatoes all over with vegetable oil; place on rimmed baking sheet. Bake until potatoes are very tender, about 1 hour 15 minutes. Remove from oven, leaving potatoes on baking sheet. Using potato masher or fork, coarsely crush potatoes on baking sheet. Transfer hot potatoes to platter; dot with butter. Sprinkle with salt and pepper; drizzle potatoes with truffle oil, if desired, and serve.

*/ Available at some supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Italian markets.

BIBB SALAD

8 SERVINGS/

Chopped chives, mint, and tarragon add an herbal note to the salad.

VINAIGRETTE

- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

SALAD

- 4 heads of Bibb lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces
- 4 tomatoes, cut into wedges
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon

VINAIGRETTE/ Whisk vinegar, chives, and mustard in small bowl. Gradually whisk in oil. Season vinaigrette with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill. Bring to room temperature and rewhisk before using.

SALAD/ Combine all ingredients in very large bowl. Add vinaigrette and toss to coat.

The National

ATHENS, GEORGIA

Because The National serves both lunch and dinner, the staff whips up two meals. The morning meal is a good time to use up produce and bread from the night before. But these aren't your typical leftovers, as the recipe below proves. The Spanish-inspired frittata was created by former line cook Brian Long, who was faced with a handful of produce, some leftover dressing, and what happened to be in the pantry.

FRITTATA WITH POTATO, ONION, PIQUILLO PEPPERS, AND CHORIZO

4 SERVINGS/

PIQUILLO PEPPER VINAIGRETTE

- 6 drained piquillo peppers from jar or can (about 3 ounces) or ½ cup chopped drained roasted red peppers from jar
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 garlic clove, peeled

FRITTATA

- 6 large eggs
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ cup chopped red onion
- ½ cup ½-inch cubes peeled red-skinned potato
- 6 ounces chopped Spanish chorizo or other high-quality chorizo, casings removed, meat crumbled
- ½ cup chopped drained piquillo peppers from jar or can or chopped drained roasted red peppers from jar
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 6 cups mixed baby greens

PIQUILLO PEPPER VINAIGRETTE/ Combine all ingredients in processor and puree until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 3 days ahead. Cover and chill. Let stand at room temperature 1 hour before using.

FRITTATA/ Preheat broiler. Whisk eggs, salt, and pepper in large bowl. Heat oil in large ovenproof nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and potato; sauté until potato is tender, 7 to 8 minutes. Add chorizo; sauté until well browned, about 5 minutes. Stir in piquillo peppers and parsley. Add egg mixture to skillet; cook until set on bottom and softly set on top, tilting skillet to allow uncooked egg mixture to flow underneath. Transfer to broiler; broil just until eggs are set, about 2 minutes. Run rubber spatula around frittata, then slide out onto platter. Cut frittata into 4 wedges; transfer to plates. Toss greens with enough vinaigrette to coat and serve alongside.

Myers + Chang BOSTON

The line cooks are in charge of family meal at this Boston spot, but every once in a while executive chef Alison Hearn takes a turn at the stove. A few fish scraps and a love of the fish fry inspired this dish. Hearn makes a quick beer batter, throws in some curry powder, and finishes it off with a sweet-spicy sauce. "Family meal all depends on what's in-house at the time," she says.

ASIAN FISH FRY WITH SPICY-SWEET SAUCE

8 SERVINGS/

To balance the sweet sauce, squeeze fresh lime juice over the fish.

SPICY-SWEET SAUCE

- 1½ cups unseasoned rice vinegar
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 teaspoons dried crushed red pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, minced

FISH

- 1 cup all purpose flour plus additional for sprinkling
- 2½ tablespoons curry powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¾ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 cups cold beer
- 4 large egg yolks

Canola oil (for frying)
3 pounds halibut or cod fillets, cut into 1½-inch chunks
Chopped fresh cilantro
Lime wedges

SPICY-SWEET SAUCE/ Stir rice vinegar, sugar, dried crushed red pepper, and garlic in medium saucepan over medium heat until sugar dissolves, then boil until sauce thickens to maple syrup consistency, about 9 minutes. Transfer to small bowl and cool.
FISH/ Whisk 1 cup flour, curry powder, 1 teaspoon salt, and ¾ teaspoon pepper in medium bowl. Add beer and egg yolks; whisk batter just until blended but not completely smooth.

Pour enough canola oil into large pot to reach depth of 2 inches. Attach deep-fry thermometer to side of pot; heat oil to 350°F. Sprinkle fish with salt, pepper, and flour. Working in batches, dip fish in curry batter; shake off excess. Add fish to hot oil and fry until golden brown and just opaque in center, turning once, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer fish to paper towels to drain. Sprinkle lightly with salt. Transfer fish to platter and sprinkle with chopped cilantro. Serve fish with lime wedges to squeeze over and spicy-sweet sauce for dipping.

Otto NEW YORK

The family meal at Mario Batali's New York pizzeria often has a Latin spin (think posole). But when morning sous-chef Antonio Maldonado is manning the stove, he likes to mix up the menu with an old-school Italian favorite, Chicken Parmesan. It's quick and easy, and the whole crew is crazy for it.

CHICKEN PARMESAN*

10 SERVINGS/

The chicken is cooked with Mario's Basic Tomato Sauce, which is adapted from his *Molto Italiano* cookbook.

BASIC TOMATO SAUCE
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1¾ cups chopped onions
4 garlic cloves, minced
¾ cup coarsely grated peeled carrots
3 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
2 28-ounce cans peeled whole tomatoes in juice

CHICKEN
10 skinless boneless chicken breast halves
3 cups fresh breadcrumbs (from crustless French bread ground in processor)
2 large eggs
1 cup (about) all purpose flour
6 tablespoons (or more) olive oil, divided
3 cups coarsely grated well-drained fresh water-packed mozzarella,* divided
1¼ cups freshly grated Parmesan cheese, divided
1¼ cups freshly grated Pecorino Romano cheese, divided
2 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley
1 tablespoon chopped fresh marjoram

BASIC TOMATO SAUCE/ Heat olive oil in large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onions and garlic; sauté until onions are soft and golden, about 10 minutes. Add carrots and thyme; sauté until carrots are soft, about 5 minutes. Add tomatoes with juice; bring to boil, coarsely crushing tomatoes with potato masher or fork. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until sauce thickens and is reduced to generous 5 cups, about 1 hour. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper.
DO AHEAD Sauce can be made 1 day ahead. Cool slightly. Chill uncovered until cold, then cover and keep refrigerated. Rewarm sauce before using.
CHICKEN/ Place chicken breast halves between 2 sheets of plastic wrap. Using meat mallet or rolling pin, pound chicken breasts to ⅓-inch thickness. Sprinkle both sides of chicken with salt and pepper. Spread breadcrumbs on plate. Whisk eggs to blend in medium bowl. Spread flour on another plate. Coat both sides of chicken with flour, then eggs, then breadcrumbs.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, add chicken to skillet and cook until brown, about 2 minutes per side, adding more oil as needed (chicken will not be cooked through). Transfer chicken to platter. Spread 1 cup sauce over bottom of 15x10x2-inch glass baking dish. Arrange 1 layer of chicken over sauce. Spoon 2 cups sauce over. Sprinkle half of mozzarella, Parmesan, and Pecorino over. Repeat with remaining chicken, sauce, mozzarella, Parmesan, and Pecorino. Bake until cheeses melt and chicken is cooked through, about 20 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley and marjoram and serve.

*/ Available in ⅓-ounce, 1-ounce, and 8-ounce balls at many supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Italian markets. Regular mozzarella can be substituted.

Proof on Main

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Because Proof on Main is connected to the 21c Museum Hotel, the staff meal is a little larger—roughly twice the size of staff meals at most restaurants we talked to. It takes a couple of hours for the cooks to prepare two meals (lunch and dinner) for about 60 hungry hotel and restaurant employees. With so many folks to feed, there has to be an organized plan. Executive chef Michael Paley and his chefs decide on a weekly menu, then stick with that lineup (including Bison Shepherd's Pie on Wednesdays and pizza on Fridays) for a few months. Bison shows up pretty frequently in family meal because the owners of the hotel and restaurant run a buffalo farm just outside of Louisville.

BISON SHEPHERD'S PIE

10 TO 12 SERVINGS/

The staff calls this dish Bluegrass Pie in honor of the homegrown bison. (Kentucky's nickname is the Bluegrass State.)

MEAT LAYER
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
2 pounds ground bison meat* or ground beef
2 cups chopped onions
8 ounces mushrooms, finely chopped
1 tablespoon tomato paste
3 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
2 tablespoons all purpose flour
2 cups low-salt chicken broth
1 cup dry red wine

VEGETABLE LAYER
2 cups diced peeled carrots
2 cups frozen green peas, thawed

POTATO TOPPING
2 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled, cut into ¾-inch pieces
1 large head of cauliflower (about 1½ pounds), cored, coarsely chopped
½ cup (1 stick) butter, room temperature

*COVER RECIPE

¼ cup whipping cream
2½ cups freshly grated Parmesan cheese, divided (about 8 ounces)
3 tablespoons finely grated peeled fresh horseradish or prepared horseradish
Extra-virgin olive oil for drizzling
Chopped fresh Italian parsley
Smoked paprika**

MEAT LAYER/ Heat 1 tablespoon oil in large pot over high heat. Add bison; sauté until browned, about 5 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer bison to bowl. Add 1 tablespoon oil to pot, then add onions and mushrooms. Sauté until soft, about 7 minutes. Add tomato paste; stir 2 minutes. Add thyme and flour and stir 1 minute. Add broth and wine and bring to boil. Return bison to pot. Reduce heat; simmer until mixture thickens and is reduced to 5½ cups, about 13 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

VEGETABLE LAYER/ Cook carrots in boiling salted water just until slightly softened, about 2 minutes. Drain. Transfer to bowl; add peas. Set aside.

POTATO TOPPING/ Cook potatoes and cauliflower in large pot of boiling salted water until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain, reserving cooking liquid. Transfer vegetables to processor and puree, adding 1½ cups reserved cooking liquid, ¼ cup at a time, until mixture is smooth. Transfer mixture to bowl; stir in butter and cream, then 2 cups Parmesan cheese and horseradish. Season potato topping to taste with salt and pepper.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Butter 15x10x2-inch glass baking dish. Spread meat mixture in dish. Top with vegetables. Spread potato topping over, covering completely and swirling with knife to create peaks, if desired. Drizzle lightly with oil; sprinkle with ½ cup Parmesan. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Chill uncovered until cold, then cover and keep chilled. Let stand at room temperature 2 hours before continuing.

Bake pie uncovered until heated through and top is lightly browned, about 50 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley and smoked paprika.

*/ Ground bison meat is available at natural foods stores, specialty foods stores, and some farmers' markets. You can also find a local source by going to bisoncentral.com.

**/ Sometimes labeled Pimentón Dulce or Pimentón de La Vera Dulce; available at some supermarkets, at specialty foods stores, and from tienda.com.

Dahlia Lounge SEATTLE

At Dahlia Lounge, family meal is pretty hearty. Fried chicken, stews, and the chicken pot pie below are staff favorites. When it's time to eat, employees fill their plates in the kitchen, then head to Table 53, a big oval table in the back of the restaurant, for dinner—and discussion. "I love family meal," says chef Tom Douglas. "It's our version of the watercooler—but with better food."

CHICKEN POT PIE

8 SERVINGS/

CRUST

1¼ cups all purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup (1 stick) chilled unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
3 tablespoons (or more) ice water
1 egg yolk, whisked to blend with 1 tablespoon water (for glaze)

FILLING

7 tablespoons butter, room temperature, divided
5 tablespoons all purpose flour
2 tablespoons olive oil
8 ounces assorted fresh wild mushrooms (such as crimini, oyster, and stemmed shiitake), sliced
1 cup chopped onion
1 cup ½-inch cubes celery
1 cup ½-inch cubes peeled carrots
1½ tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
1 garlic clove, minced
1 cup dry white wine
2½ cups (or more) low-salt chicken broth
5 cups coarsely chopped or torn roast chicken, skin and bones removed (from 1 large chicken)
1½ cups frozen green peas
⅓ cup whipping cream
⅓ cup chopped fresh Italian parsley

CRUST/ Blend flour and salt in processor. Add butter and blend, using on/off turns, until mixture resembles coarse meal. Add 3 tablespoons ice water; blend until moist clumps form, adding more ice water by teaspoonfuls if dough is dry. Gather dough into ball; flatten into rectangle. Wrap in plastic; chill at least 1 hour and up to 1 day.

Preheat oven to 425°F. Line baking sheet with parchment. Roll out crust on floured surface to 12x8-inch rectangle. Cut into 8 equal rectangles. Transfer to prepared sheet, spacing apart. Pierce crusts with fork, then brush with egg glaze. Bake until light golden, about 15 minutes. Carefully run long sharp knife under crusts. Cool on sheet. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 8 hours ahead. Let stand uncovered at room temperature.

FILLING/ Mix 5 tablespoons butter and flour in small bowl until smooth. Melt 2 tablespoons butter with oil in large wide pot over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, onion, celery, and carrots; sauté until vegetables start to soften and brown, about 10 minutes. Add thyme and garlic; stir 3 minutes. Add wine; boil until almost evaporated, about 3 minutes. Add 2½ cups chicken broth; bring to simmer. Add butter-flour mixture, 1 tablespoon at a time; whisk until incorporated and mixture boils. Reduce heat; simmer until sauce thickens, stirring often, about 5 minutes. Stir in chicken, peas, cream, and parsley; bring to simmer. Season with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 8 hours ahead. Cool slightly. Chill uncovered until cold, then cover and keep chilled. Rewarm before continuing, adding broth by ¼ cupfuls if mixture is very thick.

Preheat oven to 425°F. Transfer filling to 13x9x2-inch baking dish. Carefully place crusts atop filling. Bake until heated through, about 20 minutes. Let rest 5 minutes.

Mizuna DENVER

To make sure his staff eats well, chef Frank Bonanno orders ingredients specifically for family meal. One of his most frequent picks is pork butt, one of which can pretty much feed his 18-person staff. The cooks like to brine the meat overnight, then slow-cook it for several hours. Depending on the seasonings and the sides, the meat can have a southern or Latin influence, or an Asian flavor, as in the recipe here. The Chinese-style steamed buns were created by Chef Bonanno himself. He originally made them for family meal but decided they were so good, they should appear on the restaurant's menu.

PORK CHAR SIU WITH STEAMED CHINESE BUNS

12 SERVINGS/

2½ cups water, divided
1 cup hoisin sauce*
½ cup dry Sherry



CHICKEN POT PIE
Dahlia Lounge
Seattle

- ½ cup honey
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- 3 tablespoons minced peeled fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon golden brown sugar
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2¼ cups chopped green onions, divided
- 1 3½- to 4-pound bone-in pork shoulder (Boston butt)
- 1 cup water
- ⅓ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- Steamed Buns (see recipe)

Whisk 1½ cups water and next 7 ingredients in large bowl. Mix in 2 cups green onions. Transfer to large (2-gallon) resealable plastic bag. Add pork; seal bag. Turn to coat pork with marinade. Chill overnight.

Preheat oven to 325°F. Transfer pork and marinade to large ovenproof pot with lid (marinade will not cover pork). Cover; roast until meat falls apart, turning occasionally, about 4 hours. Transfer pork to work surface; cool slightly. Spoon off fat from pan juices. Shred into bite-size pieces; transfer to 13x9x2-inch baking dish. Stir in pan juices and 1 cup water; season with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Chill uncovered until cold, then cover and chill. Before continuing, rewarm, covered with foil, in 350°F oven, about 20 minutes.

Sprinkle pork with ¼ cup green onions and cilantro. Serve with steamed buns.

*/ Available in the Asian foods section of many supermarkets and at Asian markets.

STEAMED CHINESE BUNS

MAKES ABOUT 32/

Steam the buns in a bamboo steamer, or in a large pasta pot with a flat steamer insert.

- 1½ cups warm water (105°F to 115°F)
- 3 ¼-ounce envelopes active dry yeast
- 4 cups high-gluten flour
- 1¼ cups all purpose flour plus additional for kneading
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 4 tablespoons rendered duck fat,* melted, cooled slightly, divided
- Nonstick vegetable oil spray

Pour 1½ cups warm water into small bowl; sprinkle yeast over. Let stand until yeast dissolves, about 15 minutes.

Combine high-gluten flour, 1¼ cups all purpose flour, sugar, and salt in bowl of heavy-duty stand mixer fitted with paddle. With mixer running on low speed, add yeast mixture and 3 tablespoons melted duck fat and mix until incorporated. Increase speed to medium and mix until sticky dough forms, about 4 minutes.

Turn dough out onto floured work surface and knead until smooth, elastic, and no longer sticky, adding more flour by tablespoonfuls if needed, about 5 minutes. Form dough into ball. Grease large bowl with remaining 1 tablespoon melted duck fat; add dough to bowl and turn to coat. Cover bowl with plastic wrap, then kitchen towel. Let dough rise in warm, draft-free area until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.

Line 2 baking sheets with waxed paper or parchment paper. Punch dough down; turn out onto floured work surface. Divide dough into 4 portions; divide each portion into 8 equal pieces. Roll each piece into ball; place on prepared baking sheets, spacing 1½ to 2 inches apart. Cover with plastic wrap, then kitchen towel. Let rise in warm, draft-free area until puffed and almost doubled in volume, about 40 minutes.

Place bamboo steamer with 2 to 3 tiers in wok, or place flat steamer insert of large pasta pot in pasta pot. Pour enough water into wok or pasta pot to reach just below bamboo steamer or steamer insert; bring to boil. Remove bamboo steamer from wok or remove steamer insert from pasta pot. Spray bamboo tiers or steamer insert with nonstick spray. Working in batches, arrange buns about 1 inch apart on bamboo steamer tiers or steamer insert. Place bamboo steamer with buns in wok or place steamer insert with buns in pasta pot. Cover and steam buns until puffed and tender, about 15 minutes, adding more water to wok or pasta pot as needed. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 4 hours ahead. Remove steamer with buns from over wok or pasta pot. Let buns stand, covered, on steamer or rack at room temperature. Before serving, resteam buns 10 minutes. Serve buns warm.

*/ Available in the freezer section of some supermarkets, at specialty foods stores, and at dartagnan.com.

MORE INFO/ High-gluten flour is available at specialty foods stores and from kingarthurflour.com.

Fat Hen

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Family meal at Fat Hen is inspired by whatever the staff is craving. Some days it's buffalo shrimp tacos; other days it has to be meatloaf sandwiches or the delicious brisket sandwiches below. If the weather's nice, the staff likes to gather around the picnic tables in back of the restaurant to take a little break—and refuel. "When you're hungry, you're not concentrating on your work," says chef-owner Fred Neuville. "A full tummy is a happy tummy."

SLOW-COOKED BRISKET SANDWICHES WITH BLUE CHEESE COLESLAW

12 SERVINGS/

Look for ground ancho chile, ground chipotle chile, and Old Bay in the supermarket's spice aisle.

SPICE RUB

- 1 cup (packed) dark brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons ground ancho chile
- 2 tablespoons ground chipotle chile
- 1 tablespoon Old Bay seasoning
- 1½ teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin

BARBECUE SAUCE

- 2 large dried ancho chiles,* stemmed, seeded, coarsely torn, soaked in 1 cup hot water 30 minutes (do not drain)
- 2 cups pomegranate juice**
- 1½ cups (packed) dark brown sugar
- ¾ cup unsweetened pineapple juice
- ½ cup mild-flavored (light) molasses
- 2 6-ounce cans tomato paste

BRISKET

- 2 3-pound flat-cut beef briskets, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 3 cups (packed) dark brown sugar
- 2 cups apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup beef broth
- 2 large celery stalks, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1½ cups chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 teaspoons coarse kosher salt
- 24 rye bread slices, lightly toasted
- Blue Cheese Coleslaw (see recipe)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

SPICE RUB/ Mix brown sugar, ground ancho chile, ground chipotle chile, Old Bay seasoning, paprika, coarse kosher salt, allspice, coriander, and cumin in medium bowl to blend. **DO AHEAD** Spice rub can be made 1 week ahead. Store airtight at room temperature.

BARBECUE SAUCE/ Combine ancho chiles and soaking liquid, pomegranate juice, brown sugar, pineapple juice, molasses, and tomato paste in large saucepan; whisk to blend. Bring mixture to simmer over medium-high heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until sauce thickens slightly and is reduced to generous 5 cups, stirring frequently, about 15 minutes. Stir in 4 tablespoons spice rub and simmer 10 minutes longer, stirring often. Season with salt, pepper, and more spice rub if desired. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 week ahead. Cover; chill.

BRISKET/ Sprinkle briskets with salt, then rub 2 tablespoons spice rub over each side of each brisket. Place briskets on large baking sheet and let stand at room temperature at least 30 minutes and up to 2 hours.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add 1 brisket to skillet; cook until browned, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer to roasting pan large enough to hold both briskets in single layer. Repeat with remaining 1 tablespoon oil and remaining brisket.

Combine brown sugar and next 7 ingredients in large bowl; stir until sugar dissolves. Pour mixture over briskets, coating all sides. Cover pan with heavy-duty foil and seal tightly. Roast in oven 2 hours. Turn briskets over, cover, and continue to roast until meat is very tender and pulls apart easily, about 2 hours longer. Cool uncovered in braising liquid 1 hour. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Chill uncovered until cold, then cover with foil and keep chilled. Before continuing, rewarm briskets, covered with foil, in 350°F oven, about 30 minutes.

Remove briskets from braising liquid; reserve liquid. Shred brisket meat into bite-size pieces. Transfer to heavy large pot. Transfer braising liquid to processor; add 2½ cups barbecue sauce and puree until smooth. Add puree to shredded meat; bring to simmer. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Divide meat mixture among 12 bread slices. Top with barbecue sauce, then Blue Cheese Coleslaw. Cover with remaining bread. Serve with barbecue sauce.

*/ Available at many supermarkets and at specialty foods stores and Latin markets.

**/ Available at supermarkets and at natural foods stores and Middle Eastern markets.

BLUE CHEESE COLESLAW

12 SERVINGS/

- 8 bacon slices, chopped
- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 16 ounces purchased coleslaw mix
- 1 cup crumbled blue cheese

Cook bacon in large skillet until crisp. Using slotted spoon, transfer bacon to paper towels. Whisk mayonnaise, vinegar, and honey in large bowl. Stir in coleslaw mix, cheese, and bacon. Season with salt and pepper and toss to coat. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 hours ahead. Cover and chill.

Table Fifty-Two CHICAGO

Chef de cuisine Rey Villalobos's carnitas *recipe really puts the "family" in family meal. He and his mother perfected the dish and make it for most family celebrations. His work family is equally impressed by the* carnitas, *especially when he brings in fresh* tortillas. *Villalobos and his staff take turns cooking family meal, so everyone has a chance to make their favorite dish.*

CARNITAS WITH GRILLED SALSA VERDE AND TORTILLAS

10 SERVINGS/

- 3½ ounces achiote paste* (about ½ package)
- 8 garlic cloves, peeled
- 2 jalapeño chiles, chopped with seeds
- ½ cup distilled white vinegar
- ¾ cup orange juice
- ½ cup fresh lemon juice
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro with stems
- ⅓ cup fresh lime juice
- 2½ teaspoons coarse kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 5 pounds boneless pork shoulder (Boston butt), cut into 2-inch cubes
- 20 corn or flour tortillas
- Grilled Salsa Verde (see recipe)
- Sour cream
- Chopped red onions

Preheat oven to 300°F. Puree first 10 ingredients in blender until smooth.

Arrange pork in large roasting pan. Add achiote puree; mix to coat pork. Cover pan tightly with foil. Roast pork until very tender, stirring occasionally, about 3½ hours. Cool slightly. Coarsely shred pork. Mound pork in large bowl; add enough juices from roasting pan by ¼ cupfuls to moisten as desired. Season with salt and pepper. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 days ahead. Cool slightly. Cover and chill remaining pan juices. Chill pork uncovered until cold, then cover and chill. Before using, rewarm pork in large pot over medium heat, stirring and adding more pan juices to moisten, if desired.

Wrap tortillas in paper towels or clean kitchen towel. Microwave on high until heated through, about 1 minute. Fill warm tortillas with carnitas. Top with Grilled Salsa Verde, sour cream, and red onions.

*/ A paste made from achiote seeds; available at Latin markets.

GRILLED SALSA VERDE

MAKES ABOUT 3½ CUPS/

Grilling the tomatillos gives the salsa a smoky flavor.

- Nonstick vegetable oil spray
- 2 pounds tomatillos,* husked, rinsed
- 1 cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro
- ¼ cup warm water
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 jalapeño chile, halved, seeded

Spray grill racks with nonstick spray. Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat). Grill tomatillos until slightly softened and charred in spots, about 15 minutes. Transfer to processor. Add cilantro, ¼ cup warm water, lime juice, and jalapeño; process until almost smooth. Transfer salsa to medium bowl. Season to taste with salt. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.

*/ Green, tomato-like fruits with papery husks; available in the produce section of some supermarkets and at Latin markets. /■

CHECK OUT A SLIDE SHOW OF COMFORT FOOD RECIPES AT *bonappetit.com/go/slideshows.*

THE TECHNIQUE/

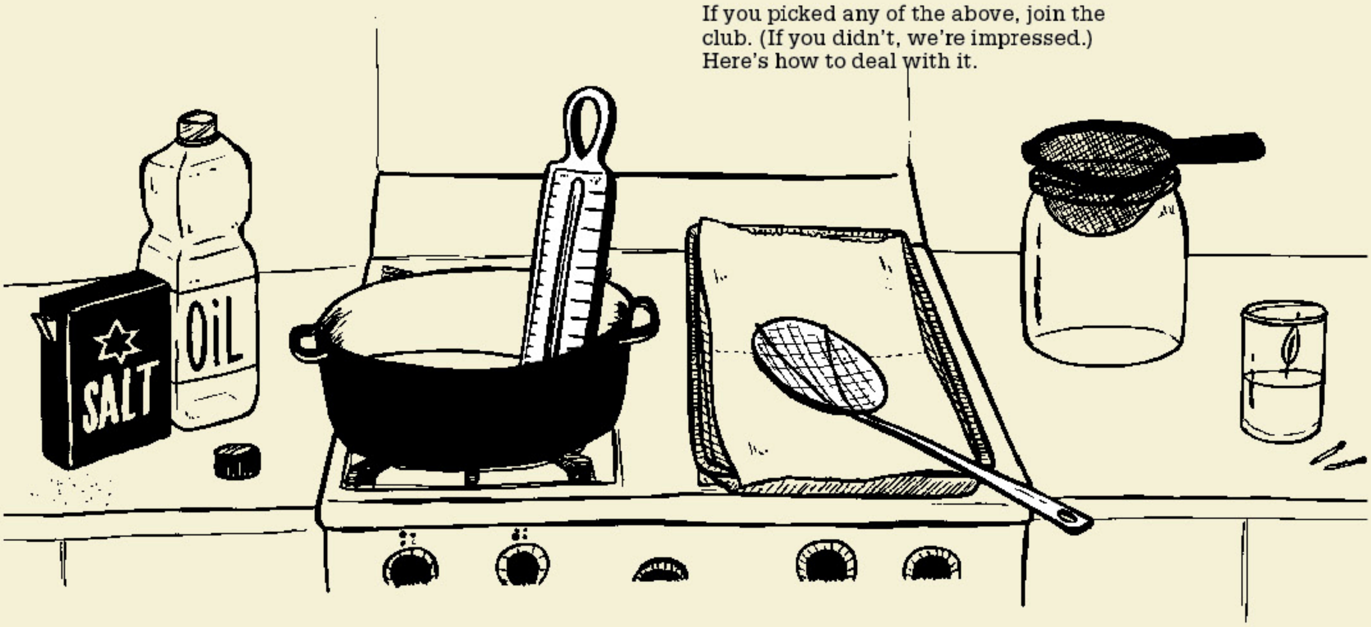
what's your fry-q?

Which of the following keeps you from frying food at home?

A/ HOT OIL
B/ GETTING RID OF THE OIL
C/ THE FRY-SHACK SMELL
D/ ALL OF THE ABOVE

from GOTT KELLER? *p. 112*

If you picked any of the above, join the club. (If you didn't, we're impressed.) Here's how to deal with it.



A/ HOT OIL It can be scary, but try this:

1/ Just before you start to fry the food, sprinkle about a quarter teaspoon of coarse kosher salt into the oil to help keep it from splattering.

2/ Lower food gently into hot oil; don't drop it from high up.

3/ If using tongs, keep them pointed downward to prevent hot oil from dripping down the handles.

B/ LEFTOVER OIL What to do with it:

1/ Unless you've fried fish in the oil, strain, chill, and reuse it—for sautéing, not deep-frying. (Particles left in the oil lower the flash point, so it's potentially unsafe for frying.)

2/ Cool the oil, strain it into a big glass jar, and store at room temperature. When the jar is full, toss it (or see next tip).

3/ Call a recycling center to see if it takes waste vegetable oil.

C/ FRY-SHACK SMELL Start the vent and:

1/ Open windows and close the kitchen door tightly.

2/ Minimize the odor with scented candles.

3/ Boil cinnamon sticks or a bay leaf in an uncovered pot.

4/ Position small dishes of ammonia throughout the house (clear of kids and pets, of course).

5/ Or deep-fry outside, using a portable burner or grill burner.

THE TOOLS/

When it's time for deep-frying, even the pros rely on these simple, effective tools for great results.

THERMOMETER/ Oil that's not hot enough is a sure ticket to greasy, soggy results. Oil that's too hot will likely result in food that's burned outside and underdone inside. A deep-fry thermometer lets you monitor the oil temperature to be sure neither happens. You'll need a thermometer that clips securely to the pot and is easy to read; $15 at *chefsresource.com.*

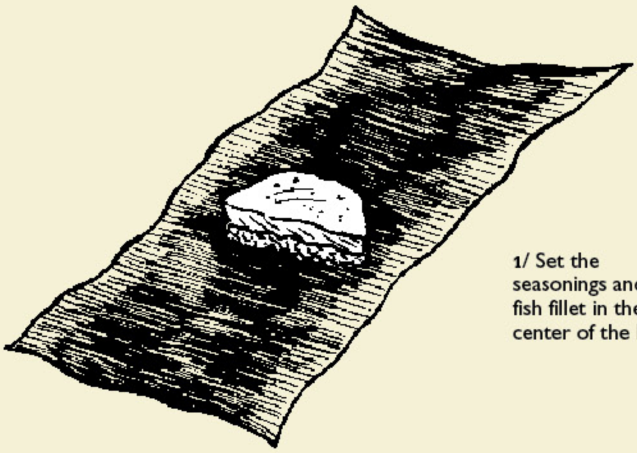
SKIMMER/ When it's time to lift food out of hot oil, a skimmer will be your new best friend because it's a spoon and strainer in one, with a nice, long handle. Make sure the head is around six inches in diameter and the handle is at least a foot long. Skimmers with bamboo or stainless steel handles are $13 at *surlatable.com.*

TEXT BY AMY ALBERT/ ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOEL HOLLAND/

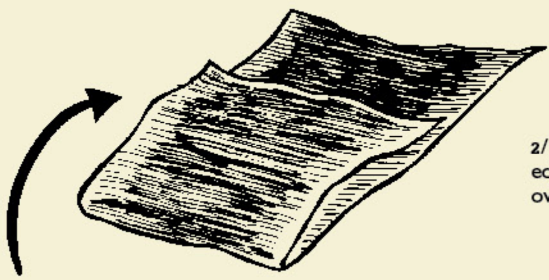
THE TRICK/

wrapping in banana leaves

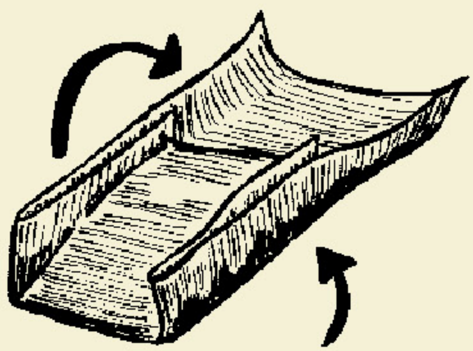
The Baked Fish with Thai Lemon-Mint Sauce on page 74 gets roasted in a banana leaf to keep it moist and give it extra flavor. The Southeast Asian answer to baking in parchment looks fancy, but it's a cinch.



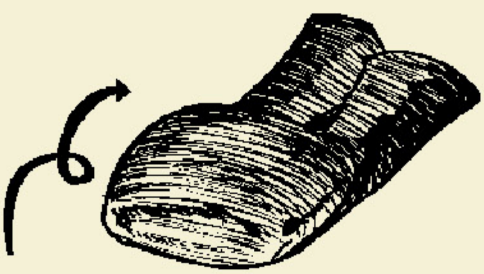
1/ Set the seasonings and fish fillet in the center of the leaf.



2/ Fold the short edge nearest you over the fish.



3/ Fold the long sides of the banana leaf toward the center.



4/ Keep folding the fish into a packet. Set it, seam side down, on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast it for about 10 minutes at 450°F. /

HOW TO HANDLE/

washing whole leeks

The Leeks Vinaigrette with Burrata Cheese and Mustard Breadcrumbs on page 108 is a great way to serve leeks. But the grit that nestles between the layers of whole leeks can ruin the entire dish. To wash whole leeks thoroughly, halve them lengthwise, splay open the layers, and run water over them until you're sure that all the grit has been removed.



OR TRY THIS/

WASHING SLICED LEEKS

If your recipe calls for sliced leeks instead of whole ones, soak the sliced leeks in a bowl of cold water. Let them sit undisturbed for about ten minutes to let the grit fall to the bottom of the bowl. Scoop the leeks out gently, taking care not to stir up the grit. Pat the leeks dry.

THE TERMS/

saucy talk

Sauce terms get tossed around with abandon by chefs (and waiters). If you've ever wondered what they mean, read on. Now you can toss them around with authority, too.

REDUCTION
ACTION/ Boiling liquid so that it's reduced in volume. PAYOFF/ Concentrated flavor. AS IN/ Most pan sauces.

***JUS* (ZHOO)**
ACTION/ Adding liquid to pan juices and then reducing. (Also French for "juice" and for the natural juices of meat.) PAYOFF/ Concentrated flavor without buttery richness. AS IN/ Simple pan sauces for steaks, chops, and cutlets.

***GASTRIQUE* (gah-STREEK)**
ACTION/ Deglazing caramelized sugar with vinegar and then reducing. PAYOFF/ Delicious sweet-tartness. AS IN/ Fruit sauce for duck.

EMULSION
ACTION/ Gradually whisking fat (like oil or butter) into something water-based (like vinegar). PAYOFF/ Smooth texture; luxurious mouthfeel. AS IN/ Beurre blanc; some vinaigrettes. /■

FIND MORE THAN 150 TIPS FROM THE *BON APPÉTIT* TEST KITCHEN AT bonappetit.com/go/tips.



THE bon appétit COOKING CLUB No. XI

SEAFOOD SUPPER

Grilled Pancetta-Wrapped Shrimp with Creamy Herb Dressing...118

Salmorejo Cordobés (Chilled Tomato Soup)...142

Herb-Roasted Whole Branzino with Potatoes, Tomatoes, and Olives...110

Bibb Salad...150

TO DRINK: Chianti

Key Lime Cupcakes...131

To find the recipes for this seafood menu, plus everything else you need (shopping lists, timelines, drink pairings) to get the party started, log on to bonappetit.com/cookingclub.

MENU IDEAS FROM THE RECIPES IN THIS ISSUE AND ON BONAPPETIT.COM

HARVEST

Wild Mushroom Crostini *108*

Pan-Seared Duck Breast with Duck Confit and Collard-Stuffed Crepes *140*

Roasted carrots

TO DRINK: Zinfandel

Grape Pie with Lemon Verbena Ice Cream *134*

WEEKNIGHT

Smoked Turkey, Blue Cheese, and Red Onion Sandwiches *56*

Frisée and Apple Salad with Dried Cherries and Walnuts *61*

TO DRINK: Beer

Old-Fashioned Brownies *131*

LABOR DAY

Hummus with pita chips

Grilled Lamb Skewers with Spiced Mint Marinade *72*

Green Lentil Salad with Bacon and Ham *33*

Grilled Zucchini with Garlic and Lemon Butter Baste*

TO DRINK: Pinot Noir

Lemon Custard Cakes with Lemon Curd Sauce and Lemon-Thyme Syrup *30*

*/ FOR THIS RECIPE, GO TO *bonappetit.com.*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM SCHIERLITZ; ILLUSTRATIONS BY JASON LEE

SOURCEBOOK/



SHOPPING INFO

At the Market: Mint/ **pp. 70–74**
"Recline" dinner plate ($10) from **CRATE & BARREL;** 800-967-6696; crateandbarrel.com. "Harmony" dinner fork ($18) by Erik Bagger from **PROPERTY;** 917-237-0123.



Molto Americano/ **pp. 102–111**
"Our Brighter Whites" dinner plates ($6 each) and soup plates ($5 each), all from **FISHS EDDY;** 212-420-9020; fishseddy.com.
All other items are privately owned.
Listed prices are approximate.

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CHOCOLATE SEBADAS *p. 111*


LAMB CACCIATORE *p. 110*


STEAMED BROWNIE WITH MINI CHOCOLATE AND PEANUT BUTTER MILK SHAKE *p. 119*

LC/ LOW CALORIE
CH/ LOW CHOLESTEROL
LF/ LOW FAT
HF/ HIGH FIBER
LSF/ LOW SATURATED FAT
V/ VEGETARIAN

FROM LEFT: CRAIG CUTLER (2); ELENA DORFMAN. NUTRITIONAL ANALYSIS BY SANDRA FRANK, ED.D., R.D.

ALICIA KEYS

singer, songwriter, philanthropist

The 11-time Grammy winner released her new album, *As I Am,* this year and will be acting in the upcoming film adaptation of *The Secret Life of Bees.* Keys is also cofounder of Keep a Child Alive, a nonprofit organization that provides medicine to HIV and AIDS patients in Africa.



On tour or at home in New York, the songstress likes to eat healthy and hearty.

What do you eat when you're on tour or traveling?
Since I don't eat meat, I do a lot of fish and veggies. I love brown rice and sweet potatoes. A lot of fruit and tea and tons of water keep my body and voice hydrated. When I need a little sugar rush, I like a couple of Starbursts.

Of all the places you've traveled, where is your favorite place to eat?
I have to say, Italy has the best food! It's like heaven on earth. I don't know how people who live there don't have to roll themselves down the street!

What would people be surprised to find in your kitchen?
Nothing surprising in the kitchen—pots, pans, dishes, a blender, a toaster, and tons of spices. I do have an out-of-control junk drawer, but I assume everyone has one.

What's your favorite restaurant, and what do you order there?
One of my favorites in New York is Puttanesca. I absolutely go crazy for the baked Branzino Marechiaro that they cover with sea salt and put in the wood-burning oven. They bring it to the table, fillet it right in front of you, and drizzle olive oil and lemon on top. Oh, my goodness! It's so pure and fresh. A side of garlic spinach, and some sliced strawberries and tea to end, and I've had an extremely fulfilling dinner.

Are there foods that always remind you of home?
Things that I can get only in New York, like veggie patties and coco bread, or pretzels and roasted nuts on the street.

What do you make at home?
Sautéed swordfish with sun-dried tomatoes, onions, garlic, peppers, and brown rice. Delicious!

What are your comfort foods?
When I need to feel warm and cozy, Cream of Wheat or macaroni and cheese.

What's the most unusual thing you've ever eaten?
At one place I've been, they have these lettuce wraps. The first time I went there, they were recommended. They gave me the fresh lettuce that you put the filling in and cover it with a plum sauce. I thought the filling was vegetables. Come to find out it was pigeon. I'm not comfortable eating pigeon. I grew up with them in New York...they don't look good.

~INTERVIEW BY BEKAH WRIGHT

PORTRAIT BY THEO WARGO/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES

 FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE RESTAURANT DIRECTORY.

ILLUSTRATION BY MASA/